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CONFIRMATION OF EXISTENCE

REASON AND SCRIPTURE

VOL. II.

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THE
COMPARATIVE COINCIDENCE
OF
REASON AND SCRIPTURE.

VOL. II.

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COMPARATIVE CONSCIENCE

REASON AND REVERENCE

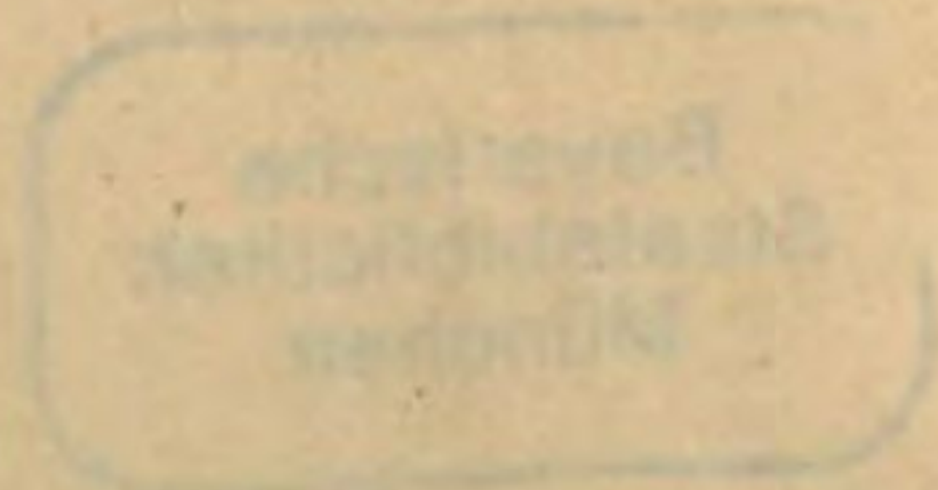
VOL. II

THE
COMPARATIVE COINCIDENCE
OF
REASON AND SCRIPTURE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER I.

It will be recollected that our first volume concluded by recording a portion of a prophecy selected from the revelation of St. John—namely, “And I saw an angel stand upon the sea, and upon the earth. And he lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth therein for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished;” and that the scriptural declarations which unfold the wonders to be manifested on this awful consummation were to be reserved for the commencement of the subject matter of our second volume.

Upon this solemn summons, rolling from the

angelic trombone through the infinite space of heaven's eternal arch, its loftiest legions wing their rapid flight unto the general standard; for in this blessed region all list under the same banner—all serve with the same leader. Celestial charioteers, myriads of high, strong, mighty angels, pryncedoms, authorities, dominions, powers, and highest potentates of highest heavens, form the resistless ranks of that almighty armament, over which the glorious Captain of all captains, the Captain of salvation, is vested sole commander. The shout of royalty bursts in ten thousand thunders forth from out this mightiest host. The Lord Jehovah is in the midst of them, as in the holy place of Sinai. And if the ministration of condemnation was made glorious, how much more will the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory! (2 Cor. iii. 9.) How glorious will be the universal jubilee! But imagination cannot soar unto the glorious glory of the King of glory—unto the glorious glory of manifested glory, blazing resplendent in the holiest of holies. Millions of high archangels' trumpets sounding at once with an exceeding loudness through heaven's majestic squadrons the awful signal for prompt readiness to attend their supreme Leader—sounding in long reverberated peals of still augmenting loudness—waxing still louder and louder still, at the command of that tremendous voice which sounds like many waters; instant precipitate with their almighty head, on paradisaic plains. Here, peacefully abiding in their fragrant bowers, myriads of happy spirits await in joyful hope the

consummation of their promised bliss : in charge of blessed cherubic bands, who, camped on neighbouring hills, alternate vigils keep.

But, though the portentous destination of this terrific armament bodes nothing less than crushing of creation into its native atoms, it here gives no alarm. The serene inhabitants of this tranquil realm are stranded where no fear can ever enter ; these formidable warriors here assume no hostile aspect ; beautiful upon these holy mountains are the feet of those who come with joyful tidings of great joy—the joyful tidings of salvation nigh ; that publish peace, that bring good tidings of good, that publish salvation, that say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. (Isaiah lii. 7.) “ Benignant are their looks—their salutation peace.”

The Captain of all captains, sovereign King and Judge, inspireth here no terror ; He sustains many characters, as well as many crowns ; He is no stranger to the happy shades reposing on these meads ; they view in him their merciful High Priest, their faithful good chief Shepherd ; they know his blessed voice : It is I, be not afraid. I am the resurrection, I eternal life. I go to awake my friends from out the sleep of death. You, gentle spirits, I re-consign to the same watchful guardians, who bore you in their arms unto this peaceful clime, downward to reconvey, ere I thrust in my sickle ; (Rev. xiv. 15 ;) “ for the harvest is fully ripe : come, get you down ; for the press is full, the fats overflow ; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in

the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." (Joel iii. 13, 14.) "But the righteous shall live for evermore; their reward is with the Lord, the care of them is with the Most High; therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand; for with his right hand shall He cover them, and with his arm shall He protect them." (Wisdom of Solomon, v. 15, 16.) Those that have been sowed in dishonour, I now will raise in glory; those that have sowed in tears, will now soon reap in joy. The common laws of nature, by me upheld no longer, now begin to fail. Adhesion, and cohesion, attraction, gravitation, magnetic and electric influence, forces centripetal, centrifugal, now cease to perform their functions, and anarchy prevails; the powers that are in heaven are consequently shaken. The hearts of the dismayed inhabitants in yonder nether heavens, failing them for fear, already see terrific signs of swift approaching judgment. Suns darkened; suns from their centres flung; (for the stars shall fall from heaven;) worlds lost in all directions; the eccentric comets flying in wild disorder, add ample fuel to the spreading conflagration.

For this tremendous day that burneth like an oven, will be revealed by fire. (1 Cor. iii. 13.) And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in worlds beneath; all elements let loose, the sea and waves loud roaring shall rage against the unwise; floods cruelly shall drown them. (Wisdom of Solomon, v. 22.) Blood, and

fire, and vapour of smoke precede this notable great day. (Acts ii. 19, 20.) Evil and adulterous generations long have sought for signs; they now will see great are my signs; mighty are my wonders. (Daniel iv. 3.) Soon will these lower heavens, rolled up like as a scroll, depart with a great noise: elements melting with fervent heat; the heavens themselves on fire; the globes that once in them revolved, will now be all burnt up, these hosts be all destroyed. For all these hosts shall be dissolved, and fall as leaves from vines, and figs from trees. (Isa. xxxiv. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 10.) The mouth of the Lord has spoken it. And my sword shall be bathed in heaven; and it shall come down upon the people of my curse to judgment. (Isa. xxxiv. 5.) I have taken my jealousy for complete armour, and make the creature my weapon to revenge me on my enemies. I have put on righteousness as a breastplate, and true judgment instead of an helmet. I have taken holiness for my invincible shield; and with my severe wrath have I sharpened my sword. (Wisdom of Solomon, v. 17—20.) Soon will the mourning tribes beneath behold the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. But who will abide this day? and who will stand when I appear? For I am like a refiner's fire, and like to fullers' soap. And I shall sit as a refiner, and purifier of silver, that I may offer unto the Lord offerings in righteousness. And I will come near to them to judgment: and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and

against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts. (Mal. iii. 2—5.) For I will rise up as in mount Perazim, and be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that I may do my work, my strange work; and bring to pass my act, my strange act. (Isa. xxviii. 21.) It then will be too late inquired, Who is this that cometh from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me. For I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury: and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart: and the year of my Redeemed is come. Mine own arm hath brought salvation to me: my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury; (and remember not my footstool heavens in this my day of anger. Lam. ii. 1.) For I will tread them down without the heavenly city, without the purlieus of the blessed celestial regions; I will trample them, and I will bring down their strength in that profane polluted place, the probationary heavens. These heavens, and all that therein are, you will soon see pass away: my words will not pass away. But,

hark ! the noise of multitudes, tumultuous noise of heavenly hierarchies of heaven's combined armies, gathering together upon these holy mountains. For the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle from far distant countries, from farthest end of heaven : even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, almighty to destroy. (Isa. xiii. 4—6.) I have opened wide my armoury, my weapons are brought forth ; (Jer. l. 25 ;) my warriors' bows are bent : their bright, sharp, glistering arrows drawn forth from out their quivers : their horses' hoofs like flint, their wheels like mighty whirlwinds, rush their chariots, horses, armies, powers, unto that awful gate, which I alone can open. (Isa. v. 28 ; xxii. 22.) “ Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in this my holy mountain : let all the inhabitants of those nether heavens tremble : for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand ; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains : a great people and a strong ; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them ; and behind them a flame burneth : and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses ; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much

pained : all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men ; they shall climb the wall like men of war ; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks : neither shall one thrust another ; they shall walk every one in his path : and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.* They shall run to and fro in the city ; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses ; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them ; the heavens shall tremble : the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining : and the Lord shall utter his voice before his army : for his camp is very great : for He is strong that executeth his word : for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible ; and who can abide it ?" (Joel ii.) " Ye multitude of terrible ones." (Isa. xxix. 5.) " Set the battle in array." (Isa. xxii. 7.) " Rend ye the heavens." (Isa. lxiv. 1.) " Rage, ye chariots." (Jer. xlvi. 9.) " Behold the noise of the bruit is come." (Jer. x. 22.) " I go before thee in my wrath, to find out all mine enemies." (Ps. xxi. 8.) I the Lord of hosts will visit them with thunder, and earthquake, and great noise, with storm, and tempest, and devouring flames of fire. (Isa. xxix. 6.) I will cause my glorious voice to be heard, and will show the lighting down of my arm with the indignation of my anger, flames of devouring fire, hail stones, scattering,

* Our readers will here observe that this description could alone apply unto celestial warriors.

and tempest. (Isa. xxx. 30.) Ye archers, bend the bow: shoot, spare ye no arrows against those who sin against the Lord. (Jer. l. 14.) For I will punish the host of high ones. (Isa. iv. 21.) The fire shall now devour them. (Ps. xxi. 9.) Every "battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." (Isa. ix. 5.) My fierce anger will not return until I have done it, and until I have performed the intents of my heart. (Jer. xxx. 24.) I come upon them in sharp judgment, horribly and speedily. (Wisdom vi. 5.) Father, the hour is come: I heave down the portentous key thou laidst upon my shoulder. (Isa. xxii. 22.) I open wide the two-leaved gates. It is done: I have broke the gates of brass, and cut the iron bars in sunder. (Isa. xlv. 1, 2.)

Swift as the lightning lighteneth heaven from one end to the other, the Almighty Lord, with all his mighty angels, in flaming fire descends into his footstool heavens with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God—pouring the fury of his fierce anger as devouring fire, hailstones, fire, and brimstone! Downward as whirlwinds, his terrific armies with tremendous rush hurl the astounding thunder-bolts of heaven's heaviest calibre: "cherubim and seraphim in burning rows," filing in all directions, running like lightning o'er the mountain-tops. (Nahum ii. 4.) Right-aiming thunder-bolts from clouds, as well-drawn bows, flying unto their mark—hailstones of wrath, cast forth from out stone bows—storm,

tempest, mighty winds loud roaring, the chariots of the Lord, myriads of high, strong angels, as flaming torches, (Nahum ii. 3,) spreading wide devastation, render his furious anger, his rebuke with raging flames of fire. (Isa. lxvi. 15.) By fire and by his sword He pleadeth with all flesh, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, his tongue as a devouring fire: his breath as an overflowing stream, reaches the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity, (Isa. xxx. 27, 28,) threshing the mountains with a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth; (xli. 15;) beating them small as chaff, winds carrying them away, whirlwinds swift scattering them; sending his blazing messengers the circuit of the heavens, chasing the reeling globes, (Isa. xxiv. 20,) like unto chased roes, (Isa. xiii. 14,) before the dreadful judgment-seat. For the awful Judge now takes his seat upon his glorious throne, (Matt. xxv. 31,) encompassed by all his holy angels. The prediction is fulfilled, I make my footstool glorious.

That terrific voice that shook our earth on Sinai, as an electric shock, now vibrates from world to world: the glory of his majesty ariseth, to shake terribly all worlds, (Isa. ii. 19,) trembling and quaking because of his wrath: the foundations of the mountains are moved, (Ps. xviii. 7,) melting like wax at the presence of the Lord, (Ps. xcvii. 5,) flow down as melting fire (Isa. lxiv. 1) turned into pitch, the dust thereof to brimstone. (Isa. xxxiv. 9.) There goeth up a

smoke from his nostrils, and fire from out his mouth devoureth ; coals are thereby kindled. (Ps. xviii. 8.) He has bowed his heavens and come down ; God is come, and will not keep silence ; it is very tempestuous round about him. (Ps. l. 3.) He has called to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me ; those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. (Ps. l. 4, 5.) He has rode upon a cherub and has fled ; yea, he has fled upon the wings of the wind ; darkness was his secret place. His pavilion round about him were dark waters, and thick clouds passed, hailstones, and coals of fire : the Lord also thundereth in the heavens, and the Highest giveth forth his voice—hailstones and coals of fire ; yea, He sends forth his arrows, and scattereth his enemies. He shoots out his lightnings, and discomfiteth them. Now the channels of water are seen, and the foundations of all worlds are discovered : at thy rebuke, O Lord ! at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils, (Ps. xviii. 15,) all nature is convulsed ; internal fires for ages raging, pent in the intestines of terraqueous bodies, with dreadful rumblings through their subterranean vaults, deep cells, and hollow caverns, force vent out huge volcanoes, issuing sulphureous smoke from every stifled crevice, every gaping chasm, form mighty columns, ascending immense heights forth from the wide-mouthed craters of the bellying mountains, and with tremendous bursts explode—oceans of boiling matter, oceans of liquid fire, deluging the circumambient countries with

hot-erupted lavas, hurling afar red-burning rocks and stones, amongst the conflicting globes, now jostling each other with sad and violent contusions. Rolling fires, melting fast down the accumulated congelations; heaped snows of long preceding ages fall in vast cataracts, tumbling from rock to rock, plunge in tumultuous gulfs, impetuous rushing their fast-augmenting torrents into the raging ocean! The fountains of the great deeps, all broken and let loose, defy all dams and sluices; their proud disdainful waves, infuriated billows, in vain wage elemental war against the fiery deluge. Extensive torrents, majestic woods, topping the heights of lofty mountains' summits, hit by the fires shot from celestial batteries, blaze up in massive flames. Under his glory the Lord of Hosts kindles a burning fire, devours his thorns and briers, and consumes the glory of his forests. (Isa. x. 16—18.) Their blazing branches, borne by high boisterous hurricanes, on long-erected fabrics—structures, standing the test of centuries—on cities, churches, palaces, docks, involve them in one flame. Combustibles of all kinds and sorts stored in magazines, are swiftly now blown up, with loud-reiterated explosions. Explosions on explosions from mines, minerals, quarries, furnaces, and forges; destructive volleys fired by the valiant ones from out the heavenly squadrons—heavy cannonades poured in all directions from heavenly artillery—heaven above, worlds beneath, all in one universal hubbub, one horrible combustion—all nature sinking into one formless mass, to one confused wreck, one vast confused chaos!

Amidst the terror, consternation, horror of this general catastrophe—*

Wak'd by archangel's pealing trombones,
Crashing all lower skies;
Call'd by their mighty Saviour forth,
The dead in Christ arise—

immortal, incorruptible. Instant ensues the grand rejoinder of dissevered natures; death is

* The reader here will be pleased to recur to observations contained in vol. i. p. 186, and which were there inserted as connected with the topics then under discussion; the author being unwilling to intrude on the awful subject now contemplating, by stating the reasons and conclusions there recorded—and which were essential preparations to a just comprehension of the stupendous acts to be performed by the Son of God, at the last decisive day; for greatly would it debase this tremendous subject, and little would it correspond with the wonderful scriptural predictions respecting it, were we to suppose that our small world, amidst the countless multitude, would then be called to judgment: revelation is clear and express on two points, namely, that all our lower hosts were formed together, and that they will all be destroyed together; and from the reasons stated in the pages to which our readers are referred, it has, we think, on good ground been concluded, that all the inhabitants of our lower heavens are composed of twofold natures, carnal and spiritual—that their probationary conflicts are produced like to ours, by the discordant inclinations of these jarring natures; exasperated by the same foul fiend who caused our degradation; and that they and us, with him and his apostate angels, (who, we know are kept for judgment till this terrific crisis,) will all receive a sentence according to their deeds, on the same notable great day of the Lord God omnipotent.

That we have in some places rendered the word 'world' worlds in our scriptural quotations is, we conceive, a very justifiable alteration. Holy writ, for the most part, accommodates itself to common and immediate conceptions; but when we read the word

swallowed up in victory ! Those who remain and are alive at the coming of their Lord, changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, are, together with the children of the glorious resurrection, quickly conveyed from out the flaming ruins—their glorious bodies fire has no power to hurt. (Dan. iii. 25.) They are caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air ; and, placed at his right hand, to be for ever with the Lord. (1 Thess. iv. 17.) A book of remembrance stands before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they now are mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in this day when I make up my jewels ; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Now shall ye discern between the righteous and the wicked ; between him that serveth God, and him

‘ world’ or ‘ earth,’ taken in connection with the passages plainly foretelling the universal destruction of all the hosts revolving in our heavens, we must feel assured, that every threat denounced against our globe, equally involves the fate of all which occupy the lower starry heavens. For it is thus argued in the epistle to the Hebrews—If they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth. But now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven : and this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made ; that those things which cannot be shaken may remain ; clearly proving, that the heavens which are to be shook at Christ’s second coming, are the lower starry heavens ; the things that are to be removed, as things that are made ; the hosts now revolving in them, and the things which cannot be shaken, and which will remain for ever, to be the second and third heaven.

that serveth him not. For behold the day is come that burneth as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day is come that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, and neither root or branch shall be left unto them. But unto you that fear my name is the sun of righteousness arisen with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall; and ye shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in this day that I will do all this, saith the Lord of Hosts. (Mal. iii. 16—18; iv. 1—3, 4, 5.)

A fearful summons now awaits those who did not die in Christ; they will also hear the voice of the Almighty Son of God; they are now compelled to obey his dreadful mandate—come forth from out their graves unto the resurrection of condemnation, (John v. 29,) and be placed on his left hand to receive their final doom. Could beatified spirits be appalled by terror, they would now transfix with horror at the tremendous clank of huge adamantine chains, astounding the astonished ears of the assembled universe; for special detachments of arch-angelic legions, headed by the mighty Potentate, bearing in trust that fateful key which opes the dark, unbottomed, infinite abyss, where, grasped in his resistless hold, the dragon, that old serpent which is the devil and Satan, had been by him cast down, and bound, and shut, and sealed up, (Rev. xx. 2, 3,) with his apostate angels, “immured in prison strong,” to be reserved for judgment, have per-

formed their dread commission, and fast near the awful throne, it has been “no narrow frith that they have had to cross,”* they have dived far down beneath the boundaries of our fair starry heavens :

“ Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary deep ; a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension ; where length, breadth, and height,
And time, and place, are lost ; where eldest Night,
And Chaos, ancestors of nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms : they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light arm’d or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene’s torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment : Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns : next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss,
The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mix’d
Confus’dly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless th’ Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds !”

MILTON.

Into this deep, dark, wild, unfathomable labyrinth, heaven’s mightiest legions plunged—fu-

* Milton.

riously driving amidst these jarring elements down the tremendous steep their flaming chariots, even to the brink of hell. Here a dread halt ensued, with such a blast of herald angels' trumpets as shook hell to its centre: Hell from beneath is moved, to meet God at his coming, (Isa. xiv. 9,) trembling throughout "the vast convex of fire."* Straightway the archangel summoner proclaimed his terrific mission; and in the name of God Most High demands, that hell deliver up all that are therein contained. (Rev. xx. 13.)

"High up draw forthwith the huge portcullis,
Which but himself, not all the Stygian powers
Could once have mov'd. Then from his side he took
The fatal key, which in the keyhole turns
Th' intricate wards; and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron, or solid rock, with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden, open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. The gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a bannered host,
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through,
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array:
So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame!"

MILTON.

To depict the horrors of this predicted hour, does far transcend our power; human ideas, (blessed be God!) are formed not to conceive hell-fire and fury—pride, terror, and despair, of hell's enraged sovereign, and his infernal legions,

* Milton.

forced now to yield by stern compulsion to the inexorable mandate, commanding the arch-heavenly escort to drag this mighty host of high ones to the great celestial bar. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. xx. 11, 12.)

CHAPTER II.

FROM God's revealed word, " who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, and hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds: who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my son: this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a son. And again, when He bringeth the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels He saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom:

thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity ; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth ; and the heavens are the work of thine hands : they shall perish, but thou remainest ; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed : but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. But unto which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool ? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation ?” From the greatness of the personage thus described, and who is, we know, our delegated Judge ;—from those condescending revelations which have graciously showed unto us things that must be hereafter ; (Rev. iv. 1 ;)—from the scriptural declarations combining symbolic and prophetic intimations ; and from the coincidence already ascertained between conclusions stated, and God’s most holy word, may we be allowed to suppose the Almighty Son of God opening his august commission by a solemn protest unto heaven and earth, calling the universe to record that He had set before the myriads of intelligents now brought unto his bar, (that every intellectual might freely take their choice,) life and good, death and evil, blessing and cursing : denouncing unto them, that if they chose not good, that they would surely perish, and be for ever shut from out the heavenly Canaan. (Deut.

xxx. 15, 18, 19.) That in as weak and as polluted nature as could be selected from the vast infinitude of worlds, He had completely vindicated his great Father's honour, by publicly demonstrating to the beholding universe, that the most feeble, most depraved nature could illustrate perfection amidst the most piercing trials. By having been himself delivered up unto the power of darkness in this degraded nature, and having triumphed over that power, He had destroyed that power: for through his merits and unfailing intercession in the recovered nature with his Almighty Father, means of escape were offered: and that He now is come to judge the assembled universe in that once frail, now glorified nature, which achieved these great exploits: a nature now more precious than fine gold; even a man more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir. (Isa. xiii. 12.) A nature tenderly touched with the feeling of infirmities, having been tempted in all points to which probationary beings could possibly be exposed, yet without sin. That not one probationary being now placed before his dreadful judgment-seat but must acknowledge that the law of God was in clear characters emblazoned on their hearts; and the commands of the all-wise Creator delivered forth, accompanied with such evidence that they came forth from God, that none but evil or misguided hearts could possibly resist. I pleaded with my Father to spare the fruitless fig trees, that I might dig and dress them; and not a being here whom I must now reject, whose conscience does not

testify that they wilfully refused my grace. I warned them of this day, that I should come in clouds with ten thousands of my saints, to execute judgment upon those whose fruit was withered, who were twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea foaming out their shame, wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever; and to convince all that are ungodly of their ungodly deeds, which they ungodly have committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners, murmurers, and complainers, walking after their own lusts, their mouths speaking great swelling words, have spoken against me: told them that my chariots were as whirlwinds, my horses swifter than eagles; and published this affliction, exhorting them to wash their hands from wickedness, that they may now be saved. (Jer. iii. 13, 14.) And that when the worlds that should begin to vanish away were finished, then would I show these tokens, that they should altogether see the awful records opened before the firmament, that those who then escaped should witness my salvation. (2 Esdras vi. 20, 25.) And “what could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?” (Isa. v. 4.) For I take pleasure in my saints: I now will beautify the meek, and deck them with salvation. (Ps. cxlix. 4.) Come, ye blessed of my Father, ye poor and meek in spirit, yours is the heavenly kingdom; you mourned and wept for sin; but now you will be comforted: hungered and thirsted after righteousness; you now shall be full filled.

Ye blessed, pure in heart, ye now shall see your God; ye blessed peace-makers are now the children of your God; you for your righteousness have often been reviled and persecuted by wicked generations speaking against you all kind of evil falsely, for my sake; but now rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward: blessed are ye merciful, ye now obtain my mercy; soon will you now sit down with me at the great marriage supper, and shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of my Father.

Far different is the doom for you on my left hand—far different the sentence your fatal choice now compels me to pronounce. How oft would I have gathered you together under my fostering wings; how often did I strive to break you from your sins, and melt your hardened hearts? and ye would not. Behold, now you are left desolate. The prince you served, bound in resistless chains, you now see stand before me; the pampered lusts you served, reign in you unrestrained. I counselled you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mightest be rich, (Rev. iii. 18,) but my golden precept you utterly despised; you did not do to others as you would have had them do to you. Your characters and conduct are the direct reverse of my prescribed word: haughty and high in spirit, you are wholly unfit for my blessed heavenly kingdom; your unrepenting hearts never shed a tear for sin; you hungered and thirsted after carnal, not after heavenly joys, and could not taste the latter; your impure hearts can never be presented to a pure and spotless

God. You were peace-breakers, instead of being peace-makers; you never can become the children of the God of love; you were the persecutors and revilers of the sons of righteousness, speaking all kind of evil of them falsely for my sake, but now you will bewail and gnash your teeth with pain for offending one of my gentle ones, who put their trust in me. You have been unmerciful, implacable to those within your power: therefore He that made you will not now show you mercy: He that formed you will now show you no favour. (Isa. xxvii. 11.) The precious time I gave you to work out your salvation, and lay up heavenly treasure, has been consumed in speaking idle, oftentimes injurious words against your fellow travellers: selfish, ungrateful, unkind, tyrannic, oppressive, fraudulent, unjust, unprofitable, designing, hypocritical, making lies your refuge, hiding yourselves in falsehood. (Isa. xxviii. 15.) I now appoint your portion with the hypocrites: full of malice, envy, hatred, revengeful, hateful, and hating one another, you now are fit associates for hell's accursed sovereign and his malign compeers; you are punished now with everlasting destruction from my presence, and from the glory of my power. My angels shall bind you hand and foot, and cast you down with the proud fettered monarch and his infernal legions in the unbottomed pit. You now will sink, together with the blazing ruins of worlds you loved too well, far, far beneath the boundaries of this once bright starry pavement, into the burning lake prepared for the devil and his apos-

tate angels—into the reserved perdition of all ungodly men. Your evil desires, furious passions, stubborn resentments, sinful lusts, might once have been destroyed—they now will ever gnaw—these worms will never die—the fire of angry passions will never be quenched in hell.

“ Under yon boiling ocean, wrap’d in chains,
You ’ll there converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev’d,
Ages of hopeless end.”

MILTON,

One last horrific act of judgment still remains to pass on you, hell’s great arch impious sovereign, and your foul host of fiends. Behold, I the Lord, the Lord of hosts, will lop your boughs with terror: your high ones of stature shall be again hewn down. (Isa. x. 33.)* For this is the day of cruel wrath, and of my fiercest anger: I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. (Isa. xiii. 11.) Thou shalt drink at my hand the cup of fury; thou shalt drink the dregs from

* The reason of our so long dwelling on this tremendous subject is for the purpose of collecting the various scriptural passages which prophesy concerning it, into one and the same address; which, as the subject matter of which it is composed is almost, if not entirely, selected from the sacred volume, behoves us to regard with seriousness, awe, and the most heartfelt gratitude the divine almighty Redeemer, who has delivered us from the wrath to come on the blessed terms of faith in his power and will to save, and obeying his precepts, (even our imperfect obedience,) for his righteousness atones for all sins excepting wilful ones, and obtains free and abundant entrance into his heavenly kingdom.

out the cup of trembling, and wring them out; for according to your augmented deeds of evil will I now repay fury to thee, my stubborn enemies, vengeance on you, my infernal adversaries. (Isa. li. 17; lix. 18; Nahum i. 2.) You now will feel that my great judgments cannot be expressed. (Wisdom of Solomon xvii. 1.) Now will I execute my heaviest judgments on thee. My fury shall go out like fire, and burn that none can quench. (Jer. xxi. 12.) Was not the blackness of thy guilt, in having been the author of exemplified evil,*—was not thy base ingratitude in degrading thy illustrious rank, thy supereminence of station, by utterly subverting the glorious purposes for which the Creator formed thee, to purposing of evil, employing the high and wondrous faculties with which thou wast endued, in doing him displeasure,—was not thy supercilious pride, in lifting up thine impious head against the tremendous majesty of heaven's eternal Monarch, and causing insurrection in his celestial kingdom,—was there not sufficient evil in perpetrating these bold deeds of darkness, to glut thy malignant spirit;—but thou must still satiate thy unrelenting malice, thy superfluity of naughtiness, by trying to destroy God's last creation of happy intellectuals? walking about like as a roaring lion to and fro among the radiant orbs which revolved in these once bright starry heavens, and with busy enmity seeking whom thou couldst devour—aiming thy venom'd dart at their probationary inhabitants? Was not the

* God ordained the liability of evil, but the arch heavenly rebel was the first demonstrator.

terrific judgment inflicted on thy fall, the dreadful doom which thrust you out of heaven and hurled you down to hell, sufficient check to stop thy rash presumption, but that thou with daring perseverance treasurest up wrath against the day of evil, which now is come upon thee, and which will now destroy thee with a double destruction? (Jer. xvii. 18.) Not that thou, thief and robber as thou art, couldst have had the smallest power of climbing up into my lower sheepfold, and like a murderous wolf catching the feeble sheep which I had penned therein, had it not been permitted thee of God. Thou, devouring lion, hadst never been allowed to pursue thy guileful way, (Jer. iv. 7,) had not God left thee to follow thine own malign devices, thereby to prove probationary beings. (Judges iii. 1.) But He knew thy going out, thy coming in—thy rage against him; therefore put He his hook in thy nose, and his bridle in thy lips, and turned thee back by the way by which thou camest. (Isa. xxxvii. 28, 29.) Thou never wast allowed to tempt intelligence above what it was able to bear: God will know how to deliver the godly out of every temptation. Those blessed beings who now on my right-hand are triumphing in glory stood many a painful conflict with thee: much didst thou buffet and afflict them during their state of trial. But they instant sought for help, and by seeking found that help was laid on one that was almighty; and through this help overcame thee as I their Lord have done, and now there fails not aught of any one good thing which I had

spoken unto them ; all is now come to pass. (Josh. xxi. 45.) Those unwise and wretched beings placed on my left hand, take : they now are thine, not mine ; for all that work iniquity I utterly disclaim ; they regarded not my works, neither considered they the operations of my hands. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure ; and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and those that once rejoiced, shall descend with thee in it ; their lofty looks shall be humbled, their haughtiness bowed down. (Isa. v. 12, 14.) The sinners in Zion shall dwell with everlasting burnings, (Isa. xxxiii. 14,) and the righteous shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of their feet, saith the Lord of hosts. (Mal. iv. 3.) But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness. (Isa. v. 16.) The decreed consumption shall overflow with righteousness. (Isa. x. 22.) And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. (Isa. xxxii. 17.) Father of lies and falsehood, black origin of exemplified evil, pride was thy fall, and pride is now thy punishment ! Over you now is spread that heavy night of darkness that waiteth to receive you ; but still thou wilt be unto thyself more grievous than the darkness. (Wisdom xvii. 21.) None but thyself can know the pangs that thou endurest. Tortured by thwarted pride, burning with maddened rage, thyself the framer and defeater of thy malignant schemes, loaded

with ignominious chains, thine impious impotence now openly displayed, at my tremendous bar thou standest, before the assembled universe the abhorred spectacle of general detestation—the most wicked, most miserable, most hateful, hating, hated being in the creation of God: an astonishment, an hissing, an everlasting reproach, and a perpetual shame. (Jer. xxiii. 40.)

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!” (Isa. xiv. 12.) Thou canst not plead thou wast not warned of this appalling hour. Thy supplication to myself, when wrapped in that weak nature wherein I bled and died, has fully proved that fact. Thou then with a loud voice didst cry, Let us alone, thou Son of God most high: Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God; I beseech thee torment me not. Art thou come hither to torment us before the appointed time? (Matt., Mark, Luke.) But how did the short respites then allowed thee operate upon thy base apostate mind? Did they produce the smallest symptom of relenting sorrow? one wish of reconciliation with thy adored Former? No; far different was the result on the inexorable obduracy of thy self-nurtured malice: thou camest down unto the inhabitants of these my lower heavens, having great wrath, because thou knewest that thou hadst but a short time.* (Rev. xii. 12.) Thus didst thou dare my vengeance. Despair eternal

* That evil beings are the agents now permitted by God to administer those trials which constitute probationary states, we have already endeavoured to prove. And as to their great

seize thee, and “perdition catch thee, hell gapeth to receive thee:” I throw you down unpitied, (Lam. ii. 17,) with your infernal host, into that boiling furnace, which ever burneth with “corrosive fire,” prepared for thee and thy rebellious angels: I now consume you with the spirit of my mouth, destroy you with the brightness of my coming; (2 Thess. ii. 8;) remand you, encom-

Lord and high opponent upon earth they had occasional access, so also by some passages in Scripture they appear to have had occasional access to Him who is present everywhere. This is elicited by the question put by the Almighty in the book of Job, From whence comest thou, Satan? (Job i. 7.) And also by the vision of Micaiah. “And he said, Hear thou, therefore, the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab that he may go and fall to-morrow at Ramoth-gilead? and one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? and he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And He said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also; go forth and do so.” By perusing the verses preceding and subsequent to the quotation just inserted from 1 Kings xxii., we perceive that the wicked king Ahab patronized and encouraged false prophets, who, only considering their own interest, foretold, or spoke, what they knew was flattering and pleasing unto him, while his faithful servant and prophet Micaiah was afflicted and imprisoned for telling him the truth. That evil beings were occasionally allowed to hold converse with good ones, is again elicited, Zech. iii. 1: “And He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee.”

passed with my terrors, (Lam. ii. 22,) to the regions of deep sorrow and impalpable gloom; consign you to augmented misery, accumulated woe, and everlasting despair. “For there is no healing of thy bruise, thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee; for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?” (Nahum iii. 19.) “Behold, my servants shall sing for joy, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit.” (Isa. lxxv. 14.) The deepness of thy sorrows none but thyself must know. Remembrance of thy former glory, and of thy former bliss, will unceasingly gnaw thy vitals with unutterable anguish, in these dread realms wherein the pride of all glory will be for ever stained: (Isa. xxiii. 9:) where all who are therein immured are sunk into unending shame, and everlasting contempt, (Dan. xii.) where the terrific fate of the once strong and mighty, who once caused terror, will ever speak from out the midst of hell. (Ezekiel xxxii. 21.) Here fixed for eternity, thou wilt thyself eternally remain the eternal monument of the woe of him whose proud presumption dared to strive with him who is great in counsel and mighty in operation; whose eyes are open upon all, to give to every one according to their ways. (Jer. xxxii. 19.) And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ. For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (Rev. xii. 10.)

With Dr. Horne may we be here allowed to suppose, that even at this tremendous juncture, “the accuser of the brethren still standeth forth in this his proper character.” Though burthened with the heaviest load of sorrows inconceivable that ever were sustained, yet that his unconquerable malice, maintaining its full force, still rises paramount over all his direful feelings, and prompts him with bold effrontery to impiously stand forth the accuser of the faithful—“Alledging against them the follies of their youth, and the infirmities of their old age, their fruitless repentance, and frequent relapses: their excesses in the pleasures of sense and their deficiencies in the duties of religion, the wanderings of their prayers, and the coldness of their charity.”* To whom the judge—Satan, for once I do allow thou dost in part speak true; frequent were the backslidings, great were the defects of those whom thou dost now accuse during their states of trial; many of these have had to combat with as evil hearts as those whom I reject; but their most energetic powers were strenuously engaged against their wicked inmates; they laboured, strove, and prayed; and I, who search all hearts with pity, viewed their penitential sorrow whenever they yielded to their inbred foe, against my vicegerent, conscience: for their every wandering was quickly followed by a flood of tears; and these I have kept corked up within my bottle, and entered in my book. (Ps. lvi. 8.) They soon returned unto the Lord

* Horne.

and Bishop of their souls; and with fear and trembling worked out their salvation. They ceased to do evil, they learned to do well; sought judgment, relieved the oppressed, judged for the fatherless, pleaded for the widow. They did not stand all the day idle, but laboured in my vineyard; their prayers and alms came up for a memorial before God: my statutes were their song during their weary pilgrimage." (Ps. cxix.) They held men's persons in admiration, because of advantage, (Jude 16;) were children in malice, and never let the sun go down upon their wrath. They are forgiven, as they once forgave; and those do now love most, who have had most forgiven. Now in great boldness do they here stand forth before the face of those who afflicted them, and made no account of their labours. Now do the wicked in great trouble see it; and with terrible fear are amazed at the strangeness of their salvation, so far exceeding all that they looked for. Repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, they now say within themselves, These are they whom we had in derision, and a proverb of reproach: we, fools, accounted their lives madness, and their end to be without honour; but now are they numbered among the children of God, and their lot is amongst the saints. Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness rose not upon us. (Wisdom of Solomon v. 1—6.) I call on the assembled universe, on heavenly hierarchies, princedoms, authorities, dominions, powers, and highest potentates of highest heavens, who now behold the thrones cast

down ; for I have wounded the heads over many countries, over many worlds, (Ps. cx. 6 ;) and I, Ancient of Days, in garments white as snow, and hair as pure as wool, seated upon my blazing throne, with wheels as burning flame, a fiery stream forth issuing from before me ; thousand thousands ministering unto me, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before me : the judgment set and passed, the awful records open. (Dan.) Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord and Judge ; though their sins have been as scarlet, they shall be white as snow ; though they have been red like crimson, they shall be white as wool. Satan did oft insinuate that I am an austere master, reaping where I have not sowed, and gathering where I have not strawed. But those blest beings, severed by my angels the just from the unjust, fully disprove his words : they have well improved their talents ; and I now receive from them mine own with usury : they have ever kept oil in their vessels to retrim their lamps ; they have been wise unto salvation, and now are ready to attend their heavenly Bridegroom, arrayed in marriage costume : for they have not been overcome of evil, but have overcome evil with good. I have pronounced them blessed, yea, and they shall be blessed. Had I not permitted evil, none could have been happy ; had I not redeemed from it, all had ever been miserable : for I, even I am He, that for mine own sake blot out all transgression, (Isa. xliii. 25,) and the heavens shall now declare my righteousness, for God is Judge himself. (Ps.

xcvii. 6.) Satan, though once thou smote the shepherd, and scattered wide the sheep, thy power is at an end: my Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one, and in vain thou disputest the prize.* They now are mine, not thine; they are not here, they are risen, and safe secured far far beyond thy reach, in the strong hold of Michael, that puissant prince of angels, and his resistless legions, whose power thou well dost know.†

But this awful day fast wears, and much remains to do; for it is not only resurrection, but coronation day: therefore, all parley I must end. Cherubim and seraphim, unsheath your flaming swords, and instant clear my footstool heavens of all things that offend!—soon will they be re-occupied by a new bright creation. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful: and he said unto me, It is done: I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. Amen.

After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia! salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto

* Michael the archangel disputed with the devil about the body of Moses. (Jude.)

† "There was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not." (Rev. xii. 7, 8.) "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people." (Dan. xii. 1.)

the Lord our God : for true and righteous are his judgments : and again they, said Amen ; Alleluia ! And I beheld, and lo ! a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, and unto the Lamb. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, who has redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and has made us unto our God kings and priests, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature throughout the triune heavens heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, both small and great ; and may the voices of the writer and the reader join the triumphant burst of the transported myriads, which now resound in loudest Alleluias, through il-limitable space, rending the universe with one ecstatic peal of harmonious acclamations : their raptured song salvation—their glorious theme the praise of him who sits enthroned, the adored object of general admiration, (2 Thess. i. 10,) chaunt-

ing aloud these accomplished prophecies, We will rejoice; in thy salvation how greatly does he rejoice! Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah. For thou hast prevented him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever. His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him. For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance. For the king trusted in the Lord, and through the mercy of the Lord Most High he has not been moved. His hand has found out all his enemies; his right hand has found out those that hated him. He has made them as a fiery oven, in this day of his anger. The Lord has swallowed them up in his wrath, and the fire has devoured them. For they intended evil against him; they imagined a mischievous device, which they were not able to perform. Therefore hast thou made them turn their backs, when thou didst make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them. Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power. (Ps. xxi.)

O Lord, we will praise thee, though thou wast angry with us; thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest us. O Lord God, thou hast begun to show thy servants thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what god is there in heaven or

in earths, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might? Now shall we in rapture pass the parting veil, and see that goodly land,* that goodly mountain of thy house, which thou hast established in the top of the mountains, and exalted above all hills: all nations shall flow to it. Many people now say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of our God. (Isa. ii. 2.) Behold, God is our salvation; the Lord Jehovah is our strength, our song, and our salvation; with joy shall we now draw water out of the wells of salvation. We praise thee, O Lord, we declare thy doings, and exalt thy name, (Isa. xii.) for thou hast done excellent things. Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he saved us. This is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will rejoice in his salvation. (Isa. xxv. 9.) Thy salvation is gone forth, thy salvation shall be for ever, and thy righteousness shall not be abolished. Thy righteousness shall be for ever, and thy salvation from generation to generation. And every tongue does now with ecstasy confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 11.)

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and

* And see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.

his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And there were great voices in heaven, saying, Alleluia! the kingdoms of all worlds are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and He shall reign King of kings, and Lord of lords, for ever and for ever. Amen. Alleluia! Thou art he, O Lord, that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon, (Isa. li. 9,) therefore the ransomed of the Lord do return with thee, and come with singing unto Zion: everlasting joy is upon our heads. We have obtained gladness and joy; sorrow and mourning are fled away for ever. (Isa. xxxv. 10.) For the Lord hath comforted Zion, he has comforted her waste places, and has made her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. We will greatly rejoice in the Lord; we are very joyful in our God: for He hath clothed us with the garments of salvation; He hath covered us with the robe of righteousness: we are decked with ornaments, and adorned with bridal jewels. (Isa. lxi. 10.) The Lord of Hosts is unto us a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty. (Isa. xxviii. 5.)

But these sublime effusions now are silenced

by the mighty sound of heaven's mightiest trumpets: for the eternal, high, Melchisedecal priests, each at his standard's head,* proclaim aloud throughout infinite space, the triumphant festival of general jubilee—the glorious festival of general redemption—the glorious sabbath of everlasting rest.† These hallowed potentates sound not an alarm,

* “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver; of an whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.” (Numb. x. 1, 2.)

† “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.” “And the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath of rest unto the Lord. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for the stranger that sojourneth with thee. And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound, (prefigurative of the universal jubilee to be celebrated when the seventh angel sounds,) on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land, (prefigurative of the great decisive day when the grand atonement is accepted for all throughout the vast infinitude of space.) And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year,

(Num. x. 7,) they blow the rapturous call for gathering together the countless congregation of redeemed spirits,* who now in ecstasy await the transporting signal for their blessed ascent; the Lord Jehovah has gathered all nations and all tongues; all will in rapture see the glory of their God. (Isa. lxvi. 18.) Behold, the Lord himself proclaims, I have preached the gospel to the poor, I have healed the broken-hearted, delivered free the captives, recovered the blind, set the bruised at liberty: I now proclaim the glorious year of universal jubilee, the hallowed year of acceptation with their Lord and God. Thus, He who loosed

and proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you." (Levit. xxv. 1—10.)

* "But when the congregation is to be gathered together, ye shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm. And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations. Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God. And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony, (prefigurative of the last parting veil to be removed on the decisive day.) And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai, (prefigurative of the ascension unto highest heavens which will succeed the final judgment-day;) and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. And they first took their journey according to the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses. In the first place went the standard of the camp of the children of Judah according to their armies," towards the land of Canaan. (Numb. x. 7—14.)

the seals fulfilled the prophecy ;* and the eyes of

* “And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and he cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the

all assembled in the valley of decision are fastened upon him. (Luke iv. 16—20.)

seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." (Rev. v. 1—9; x. 1—7.)

CHAPTER III.

THE ASCENSION.

ARISE, shine forth, thy light is come, on thee thy glorious Lord
 is ris'n,
 The trumpets sound, He gives the word for thine ascending flight
 to heav'n ;*
 The brightness of his righteousness triumphant guides to highest
 skies,†
 To the fair temple of their God his countless hosts transported
 rise ;
 Salvation, as a burning lamp, does his unnumber'd tribes pre-
 cede,
 To the bless'd, promis'd, heavenly land unveiled glory upwards
 leads.
 Led by the radiant morning star, the wise unto salvation fly,
 All things in glory will behold the heavenly epiphany—
 All nations, kindreds, people, tongues will manifested glory see,
 In beatific vision have fruition of the Deity.
 The infant cherubs spread their wings,‡ the new-born seraphs
 sweetly sing
 Melodious warbling as they fly, ecstatic notes of victory ;
 Angelic legions, van and rear, enraptured join the gen'ral cheer,

* Isai. lxi. 1.

† Isai. lxii. 1.

‡ “ The children of the glorious resurrection,” that is, the spirits of just men made perfect in paradise, and advanced to angelic nature on their joyful reunion with their once vile, but now glorified bodies.

With loud hosannas all acclaim, blessings on him who, in God's
name,

To work this great salvation came, and his blest kingdom did
proclaim.

Hosanna in the highest! ambrosial wreaths of life they strew,
With fragrant, scented, balmy dew, from heav'nly flow'rs of
dazzling hue;

And as aloft they swiftly soar, their noble theme of praise pur-
sue,

God is our strength, God is our song, all praise and power to
him belong;

His name we laud and magnify, for He hath triumphed glo-
riously;

He our salvation is become, our God we will exalt on high;
Glorious in pow'r is his right hand, it hath dash'd down the
enemy.

The greatness of his excellence hath overthrown the arrogance
Of those who impious rose against the might of his omnipotence,
He swift sent forth his wrath, and they as stubble are consum'd
With his destroying nostril's blast—deep down in hell they lie
entomb'd.

O who is like the Lord our God, with him in pow'r who can com-
pare?

Glorious is He in holiness, his fearful praise none can declare;
The mighty wonders of renown wrought at his last, dread, awful
trump,

When He stretch'd out his own right arm, and all his foes were
swallow'd up.

He now in mercy leadeth forth his servants whom He hath re-
deem'd,

Girded with his Almighty strength, with immortality they teem,
His purchased possession pass to the blest realms of peace and
love,

Pass over with their leader to the heav'nly Canaan up above;
Unto his holy, blest abode, He'll bring them in and plant
them fast,

His mountain of inheritance will ever and for ever last.

That place, O Lord, which thou hast made, wherein to dwell
above the sky,

Which thine own hands have stablished thy consecrated sanc-
tuary;

There thou wilt ever, ever reign, and we shall ever bless thy
name ;

With clarions sweet, and lutes and lyres, angelic choirs respon-
sive sing,

And angels ever "bright and fair," recount the triumphs of their
King ! *

Aloud the watchmen now do cry that they the heav'nly Elim spy,
One pealing shout rends through the sky, all is love, transport,
ecstasy,

For God in glory Zion brings,† augmented rapture speeds their
wings,

Lighted by glory's splendid torch, they fly into the heavenly
porch ;

Th' eternal gates lift high their heads, the everlasting doors un-
fold,

The King of glory enters in, the great etherial trumpets sound
The entrance of the royal Priest into his blest, celestial fold,
Cherubic chor'sters usher in the mighty Lord of hosts on high,
With loud hossannas, rapturous cheers, and heaven's harmo-
nious symphonies.

Angels waft galbanum, cassia, nard and odours sweet perfume
the sky ;

The Captain of salvation gives his supreme, sov'reign, high, com-
mand,

That all his victors freely pass,—the unbarr'd gates wide open
stand :

Go through, go through,‡ their Lord proclaims, whilst they on
him their blessings show'r ;

In the vast heav'nly paradise his countless ransom'd myriads
pour.

On its bright, verdant mountain-tops, for a short space, amidst
the blest,

In this pure, hallow'd holy place, the glory of the Lord does
rest ;§

With exquisite delight and joy his winged hosts again re-see,
Blooming, in never-ending spring, the seat of their felicity ;

* The above lines are taken from that noble effusion denomi-
nated the "Song of Moses." (See Exod. xv.)

† Isai. lii. 8.

‡ Isai. lxii. 10.

§ Numb. x. 12.

Its groves of citron, pine, and palm,* its flow'ry lawns, enamell'd
 plains,
Water'd from chrystal founts which flow in limpid, wide, mean-
 dering streams.
O'er these, through the mellifluous air, his radiant legions lightly
 skim,
And gliding down on these soft meads, on them their glittering
 wings they trim ;
Where amaranth, rose, and jasmine bow'rs in clouds of fra-
 grance join their charms,
The victor host twine roseat flow'rs with glossy boughs of branch-
 ing palm.*
The tree of life in midst of these, buds, blooms, and yields its
 vital fruit,
All taste the blessings free dispens'd from its divine, balsamic
 root ;
At the pellucid living wells, where oft their much lov'd Shepherd
 led,
Refreshing draughts of life they quaff at these great heav'nly
 fountain heads ;
The spirit of the God of love descends benignant from above,
And hovering, dove-like, o'er their heads, on them his choicest
 influence sheds.
But here, though exquisitely blest, is not their place of final
 rest,

* “ And they came to Elim where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees : and they encamped there by the waters.” (Exod. xv. 27.) “ And the arches thereof had palm-trees, one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts thereof.” (Ezek. xl. 26 ; also verses 3, 34, 37.) “ And it was made with cherubims and palm-trees, so that a palm-tree was between a cherub and a cherub.” (Ezek. xli. 18.) “ When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took branches of palm-trees and went forth to meet him.” (John xii. 12, 13.) “ After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.” (Rev. vii. 9.)

Their hearts aspire in higher skies, to God the source of all their joys,

Where all their hopes did ever tend, t'wards their first, best, eternal friend.

The regal trumpet sounds the call, loud shouts of transport burst from all,—

The glory of the Lord ascends,—to paint their joys our pow'r transcends.

From sweet repose they instant rise, their splendid pennons quick replume,

The rapt'rous summons prompt obey, and swift their lofty flight resume,

Supported by Almighty pow'r, to regions vast and high they tow'r.

And as in bliss they rapid soar, new realms of wonder they explore,

Resounding through th' ambrosial sky, their high-exulting strains of joy,

Filling illimitable space with their triumphant harmony,

And as their adored goal they near, increasing in sublimity.

Soon will the parting veil be rent, soon shall we now see eye to eye,

The holy, high, and lofty One, inhabiting eternity!*

He in Mount Zion ever reigns, before his ancients, gloriously.†

But now amidst seraphic cheers, their high inheritance appears,

Stretching its lofty vast frontiers.

The heaven of heavens bursts on their sight, that seat of infinite delight:

Houses of God not made with hands, which in the heavens eternal stand—‡

In ecstasy aloud they cry, We see the holiest of all—

The glory of the Lord Most High, beaming o'er its magnificent wall!

Founded with sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, ber'l,

Amethyst, topaz, chrysoprasus—the streets of gold, the gates of pearl.

* Isa. lvii. 15.

† Isa. xxiv. 23.

‡ 2 Cor. v. 1.

“The mighty regencies they pass, of cherubim and seraphim,”*

With wonder and amazement, Jehovah’s name sublimely hymn.
Princedom, authorities, dominions, powers—all heav’ns mightiest potentates,

As swift they near their lofty towers, with overflowing joy dilate,
“Thousands on thousands high advance, standards and gonf-
lons stream in air,

Distinguish orders and degrees; or on their glittering tissues bear

Holy memorials bright emblaz’d, which acts of zeal and love declare.”†

Aloud the instrumental bands of all these glorious squadrons bright,

Melodious, touch’d by heav’nly hands, resound through the fair realms of light.

Surrounded by these sainted hosts, the gratulations of the blest,
Highest hosannah’s raptured songs, in sweetest harmony express.

Th’ filial Deity descends—th’ effulgent glory now abides
By heav’ns bright boundary, ’twixt the veil, and its resplendent altar’s side.‡

His countless legions, swift as light, spread o’er the fair ethereal plain,

Encircle in a semi-form, round the resplendent incense fane.

Here heav’nly asaphs, heav’nly priests, with psalteries, cymbals,
trumpets, harps,

Continual sound their raptur’d praise before God’s holy covenant ark.§

* Milton’s Paradise.

† Milton’s Paradise Lost, the blank verse altered into rhyme.

‡ Incense altar in holy place.

§ Covenant ark. “Now therefore, arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place, thou and the ark of thy strength; let thy priests be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.” (2 Chron. vi. 41.) “And when all the children of Israel saw the glory of the Lord, they worshipped and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.” (2 Chron. vii. 3.)

Celestial censers * fume on high, richest perfumes waft through
the air ;

Attendant spirits fragrance shed, which swift-wing'd cherubs
strew afar :

A voice from out God's glorious throne proceedeth now, com-
manding all

The hallowed, blest transported hosts, to praise their God, both
great and small ! †

Instant one burst of praise ascends, loud as when mighty waters
dash ;

With praise the highest heav'ns are rent, loud as when mighty
thunders crash.

But human thought cannot conceive, or paint on earth their
ecstasy ;

We cannot speak the love wherewith Jehovah's praise they mag-
nify.

No silent tongue, no muteless string, are 'mongst th' unnumber'd
myriads found ;

Angelic choirs o'er choirs sweet sing, orchestras o'er orchestras
sound :

Their lofty throne Jehovah's honor, salvation, glory, might, and
power ; ‡

As one the sainted hosts rejoice—the universe sound as one
voice—

The triumphant shout of jubilee, in one harmonious peal now
giv'n,

The mighty chorus, which proclaims melodious through the vast
of heav'n—

Hallelujah ! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth ! The king-
doms

Of all worlds, are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of
his Son ;

And He shall reign King of kings, and Lord of lords, ever and
for ever

Oh ! let us high extol his fame, and high o'er all exalt his name ;
For the marriage of the Lamb is come ; § the spirit and the bride
say, Come !

* 1 Chron. xvi. 6.

† Revelation.

‡ Rev. vii.

§ Rev. xxii.

Immoveable his kingdom stands, for none can wrest it from his hands.

Worthy, O worthy is the slaughter'd Lamb to receive honour, Riches, glory, blessing, praise, strength, wisdom, majesty, and power.

These ectacies are silenc'd by the glorious Bridegroom's voice, His friends around who hear his call, with an exceeding joy rejoice ;*

From her blest guardians, now the King his holy church demands—

Commands that He receives his bride at their high, hallowed hands :

Michael stands forth, † the mighty prince, respondent for th' angelic bands.

With duteous zeal and fervent love, to thee our adored Lord and Head,

The sacred charge from thee receiv'd, in worlds beneath we ever led :

And to salvation's heirs ‡ with joy, unceasing aid administer'd— Upheld them in our guardian arms, and rescued them from varied harms.

Thy weakest members ever were the objects of our tender care ; With highest triumphs we present, to thee our sov'reign Lord and King

Thy bride, the glorious church, now free from spot, or wrinkle, or such thing. §

Refin'd from dross, as silver tried, and seven times seven times purified ;

And by this church thy heav'nly powers, and principalities clear see,

Fully demonstrated the wisdom of th' admired Deity.

By these blest guards the bride is led, her steps by sweetest scents embalm'd,

Attir'd in robes of spotless white, her hands bear boughs of branching palm, ||

Blooming in fresh, immortal prime—adorn'd with graces all divine.

* Matt. ii. 10.

† Dan. xii. 1.

‡ Heb. vi. 17.

§ Eph. v. 27.

|| Rev. vii. 9.

Whilst seraphs sing, and cherubs chaunt, the bride is to the altar brought ;

The glorious King receives their charge, with open arms, benignant eyes,

Addressing his young angel hosts, ere He conducts to highest skies—

My much-beloved, purchas'd church—my promise I at length fulfil,

That I would bring those nigh to God, who meek and lowly did his will :

In glory's blaze at this high fane, blissful you stand before God's throne

One sits thereon, in sight like to a jasper and a sardine stone.*

Ere I receive you to myself, and take you to my Father's house,

By pure and tenderest love allied, my spotless bride I here espouse.

The righteous sceptre which I sway, you'll love, and honour, and obey ?

Vowing unto the Trinity, allegiance through eternity ?

Ecstatically they reply—With thy blest terms we here comply :

Triumphant give our solemn pledge, before this heav'nly company—

The Father and the Son are one; th'unmeasur'd Spirit dwells in me;

A portion of it I impart, which ever more shall dwell in thee:

As the blest Father dwells in me, so I will ever dwell in thee.

Perfect in one, † incorporate with my vast celestial family.

By me, their adored Lord and Head, fit fram'd, ‡ compact and nourished.

Heav'n's mightiest pow'rs the nuptials sing, and heav'n's high arch with greetings ring.

But gratulations all soon cease, subsiding in a gen'ral hush ;

No string vibrates, no zephyr moves, all listen to the bridal church :

In sweetest strains th'enraptur'd bride, melodious warbles a new song ; §

Sings joys none but herself can learn—joys which alone to her belong.

* Revelation.

† John xvii. 23.

‡ Eph. ii. 21.

§ "And they sing a new song" (Rev. v. 9.)

None but the ransom'd e'er can taste the sweetness of redeeming grace.

The greatness of salvation's bliss, in high sublimest notes she tells;

Above all notes this note does swell—our Jesus hath done all things well!*

Remembrance of his suffering love will ever live in us above;
No longer strangers, foreigners, but members of Christ's family;
Citizens with the saints in light, and heav'ns highest sanctities,
Of God's blest household in the sky, and cherish'd by the Trinity.

On soft recorders angels join, and raise the song with chords divine.

But now ensues a solemn pause: for th' Almighty King of kings,
and Lord of lords

Before the great Jehovah spreads his cause:

Father, it is my sov'reign will, that those thou hast given me
may be with me still;

That they the glory may behold, I ever had with thee of old;

That in the brightness of full glory they may see, the refulgent
splendor of the Trinity,

In the transcendent fulness of the glorious Unity!

But who is He who thus assumes this lofty tone when addressing Omnipotence?—"Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am?"—Who thus demands an entrance for his servants into the high emporium? It behoves us to inquire; for this language breathes a powerful assurance, that it was uttered by one, who deemed it no robbery to be equal with Omnipotence; who deemed it no robbery to be equal with God.

* "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. xxxv. 10.)

We shall commence this object of research, by humbly endeavouring to ascertain from the Scripture in what light our ever blessed Saviour designed us to understand his declaration that He was the Son of God. That the whole intelligent creation throughout the boundless universe are the offspring of God; for in him all live, move, and have their being;* and on these accounts

* Acts xvii. 28; Gen. vi. 2; Job i. 6. "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord." Dr. Doddridge's Expositor explains as follows: "It is true, indeed, this is a dignity which only attracts the observation of very few; and in this respect the world knows us not, and doth not acknowledge us for what we really are, because it knoweth not him who is God's eternal and first-born son, the head of the family, through whom we have received the adoption. Behold, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as He is." (1 John iii. 2.)

Dr. Doddridge continues: "Such are the unhappy prejudices of apostate men against the divine will and the divine image, that Christ himself was unknown while He dwelt in human flesh: and therefore it is no wonder that we are so, in that respect in which we resemble him. Nevertheless, my beloved, it is a most certain and a most joyful truth, that now we are the children of God; and a truth which draws after it a long train of glorious consequences: for it doth not yet perfectly appear what we shall be; the inheritance we expected is far beyond what we can at present conceive. But this we know in the general, that if He by whom we have received the adoption be revealed, as He certainly will at length be, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. We shall have so distinct and clear a view and discernment of him, as shall transform us into his image, even the image of his holiness, the brightest and most illustrious of the various glories with which He is invested."

(It doth not yet appear, &c.) It is observable, that these are the words of John—of him who had not only so familiarly con-

may be, and are, styled the sons of God, is an undeniable fact; and that the regenerate Christians, who in scripture language are said to be born of God, (1 John ii. 29,) are likewise so called, cannot be denied. Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, should be honoured with so sublime an appellation, should be called the children of God, as he hath himself expressed it—"I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. vi. 18.) Man is thus denominated: (Gen. vi. 2.) "And it came to pass, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men." The genealogy of our blessed Saviour's earthly descent recorded by St. Luke, thus concludes—"Which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God." And angels are so designated, when it is said, that the morning stars sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. But that great vindicator of Jehovah's honour, and consequent Redeemer of all who accept his tendered terms, certainly represents himself, and is represented by the whole mass and tenor of the epistle of John, as well as of his transfiguration, when Moses and Elias appeared in such refulgent glory. He also, as Mr. Baxter observes in this connexion, saw a most glorious vision of the new Jerusalem: but it may be doubted, whether this epistle were not of an earlier date than the Apocalypse; and it seems most probable that it was so, both considering the great age of this apostle when banished to Patmos, and how naturally some things on which he touches, in this epistle especially, relating to antichrist, might have been illustrated by what he saw there.

Scripture as the Son of God, in a sense entirely paramount, towering over and weighing down the subordinate sense in which this denomination is otherwise bestowed, whether upon men or angels. The first answer to our inquiry, and supporter of the assertion stated, is contained in the second Psalm and second verse: "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands"—clearly speaking of the Lord and his anointed in terms of equality. And in the last verse it is said, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God. Also I will make my first-born higher than the kings of the earth." (Ps. lxxxix. 26, 27.) "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Ps. cx.)

By this passage it was that He who could alone appreciate the highness of his own rank in the universe, and the nearness of his affinity, and the super-eminence of his relationship to the supreme being, was pleased to rectify the answer He received from the Pharisees to that most important question put by himself to them, "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine ene-

mies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is He his Son? And no man was able to answer him a word; neither durst any man, (from that day forth,) ask him any more questions." And the answer which thus silenced them, is doubtless amply sufficient to silence us, and close this inquiry. But as the Scripture supplies such a weight of additional evidence on this point, we shall continue our insertions of it. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bare a son, and shall call his name Immanuel;" (Isa. vii. 14;) which, as St. Matthew observes, being interpreted, is God with us. This was never said of God's servants the prophets; therefore, veiled in the human nature of Jesus Christ, God was unquestionably with us in a very different sense, and in a way completely surpassing the assistances received at sundry times, and in divers manners by our fathers, from inspired, but very subordinate agents. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!" (Isa. ix. 6.) Here now is a passage handed down to us by the enemies to, and unbelievers in, Christianity; admitting no doubt as to its interpretation—a passage inserted in a book of the most acknowledged and unquestionable authenticity;* a book, the contents of which alone is amply sufficient to fully and most satisfactorily establish every doctrine contained in the New Testament. "Unto us a child

* See Paley's Evidences, and others.

is born ;" that human nature, unto which the Son of God so wonderfully condescended as to unite himself, and in which he glorified his Almighty Father. "Unto us a Son is given"—a Son who, as the high characteristics to be after particularised plainly show, was so denominated in a very widely different sense to that in which it was ever elsewhere given unto any other intelligent being. "And the government shall be upon his shoulder :"—of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end.* "His name," (most justly styled) Wonderful—wonderful in his union with the Father, wonderful in his incarnation, wonderful in his love, wonderful in his condescension, wonderful in the offices He fills, wonderful in the acts which he performs. "Counselor :"—in the first chapter of the Bible, we find record of this truth, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ;" and again, (Gen. xi. 7,) "Let us go down."† And there shall come

* Isa. ix. 7.

† "The phraseology in which this resolution is couched, is remarkable : "Let us make man." But the Old Testament furnishes more instances of a similar kind. Behold, man is become like one of us : Let us go down and confound their language ; Whom shall we send, and who will go for us ?—These plural forms thus used by Deity, demand our attention. Three solutions of the question have been offered : the first is that given by the Jews, who tell us, that in these forms God speaks of himself and his angels. But may we not ask upon this occasion, Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor ?—with which of the angels did He at any time vouchsafe to share his works and his attributes ?—Could they have been his coadjutors in the work of creation, which He so often claims to himself, declaring He will not give the glory of

forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and the spirit of counsel shall rest upon him. (Isa. xi. 1, 2;

it to another? Do we believe, do the Jews believe, did any body ever believe, that man was made by angels? Upon this opinion, therefore, we need not spend any more time: we know from whence it came, and for what end it was devised and propagated. A second account of the matter is, that the King of heaven adopts the style employed by the kings of the earth, who frequently speak of themselves in the plural number, to express dignity and majesty; but doth it seem at all reasonable to imagine, that God should borrow his way of speaking from a king, before man was created upon the earth? The contrary supposition would surely carry the air of more probability with it, namely, that because the Deity originally used this mode of expression, therefore kings, considering themselves as his delegates and representatives, afterwards did the same. But however this might be, the interpretation, if admitted, will not suffice to clear this point; for as it has been judiciously observed, though a king and governor may say 'us,' and 'we,' there is certainly no figure of speech, that will allow any single person to say 'one of us,' when he speaks only of himself. It is a phrase that can have no meaning, unless there be more persons than one concerned. What then should hinder us from accepting the third solution, given by the best expositors ancient and modern, and drawn from this consideration, that in the unity of the divine essence, there is a plurality of persons, co-equal and co-eternal, who might say with truth and propriety, Let us make man; and man is become like one of us? Of such a personality revelation informs us: the creation of man, as well as all things else, is in different passages attributed to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; what more natural therefore, than that at its production this form of speech should be used by the divine persons? What more rational than to suppose, that a doctrine so important to the human race was communicated from the beginning, that men might know whom they worshipped, and how they ought to worship? What other good and sufficient reason can be given, why the name of God, in use among believers from the first, should likewise be in the plural number connected with

xxviii. 29.) The Lord of Hosts is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working, (Jer. xxxii. 19;) great in counsel, and mighty in work. (Zech. vi. 12.) “Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold the man, whose name is the branch; (that man in whom the Son of God was pleased to become enveloped;) and He shall build the temple of the Lord, and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and He shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”

With that perfect consistency which pervades the sacred records, we find the same phraseology again employed in the New Testament (John iii. 11, 13) by our blessed Lord himself: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man that is in heaven;” plainly proving, that the plural pronouns *we*, and *our*, must mean

verbs, and pronouns in the singular. It is true, we Christians, with the New Testament in our hands, may not want these arguments to prove the doctrine; but why should we overlook or slight such very valuable evidence, of its having been revealed and received in the church of God, from the foundation of the world? It is a satisfaction, it is a comfort to reflect, that in this momentous article of our faith we have patriarchs and prophets for our fathers; that they lived, and that they died in the belief of it: that the God of Adam, of Noah, and of Abraham, is likewise our God; and that when we adore him in three persons, and give glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, we do as it was done in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.”—*Dr. Horne’s Sermon on the Creation of Man.*

himself and the Father ; that though He was incarnate upon earth, yet that the communication with his heavenly Father was preserved, and in that sense He was still in heaven : but of this hereafter. Furthermore we find him who in the Old Testament is described as Counsellor with the Most High, asserted to be in the eternal counsel of God, the Creator of all things : for “all things were made by him ; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (John i. 3.) “The world was made by him, and the world knew him not.” (John i. 10.) Who is the image of the invisible God ? The first-born of every creature ; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers : all things were created by him and for him. (Col. i. 15.)

God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things ; by whom also he made the worlds (Heb. i. 2.)—not world, in the singular, but worlds, in the plural ; corroborating and agreeing with the just inserted declaration of St. Paul, in his epistle to the Colossians, namely, that all things were made by him and for him, both visible and invisible. If, therefore, He, who was the ordained inmate in the child that is born, the Son who is given, was the agent employed by Omnipotence in the creation of all things, and all things were created by him and for him,—reason itself suggests, that He who was endued by Omnipotence with the power of performing such acts of omnipotence,

would be admitted to the counsel of Omnipotence; and that the supreme Being would not have ordained him, (who was appointed heir of all things, who by the blood of his cross was the reconciler of all things, for whom all things were made, and who, consequently, was so deeply interested in these works of wonder,) to perform these works of wonder without previous counsel having passed between the Father and the Son respecting such stupendous operations.

His next appellation, "the Mighty God," fully accounts for the preceding one. With whom could the mighty God take counsel, (Isa. xl. 14, *) except Almighty God, his blessed Almighty Father,

* This whole chapter clearly asserts the divinity of the Redeemer, and completely silences a supposition we have seen advanced, namely, that when God said, "Let us make man in our image," he was counselling with angels or attendant spirits. This chapter, after clearly speaking of the Redeemer as very God of very God, and in lofty terms describing from the works of creation, the glory of God, and consequently of his Son who was the agent employed, puts these questions: To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold, who hath created these things, who bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might; for that He is strong in power; not one faileth. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him? With whom could he have counselled and acted in concert, but with his only-begotten Son, one God with himself. And that He did so, the title of Counsellor, affixed by Isaiah to the Redeemer, very plainly proves.

with whom He reigns one God, blessed for evermore, and was ordained to become incarnate, in the child predicted to be born? The everlasting Father, one with the everlasting Father, and himself the everlasting Father of the whole creation; as by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth. The everlasting Father not only of the material creation, but the intellectual one; dominions, principalities, and powers in heavenly places; and who in counsel with Omnipotence made man in the image of God;* who came unto his own though his own

* As God is a spirit, the similitude here spoken of must be a spiritual similitude; and the subject to which it relates, must be the spiritual part of man, his rational, immortal soul. To discover wherein such image and likeness consisted, what better method can we take than to inquire wherein consists that divine image and likeness which, as the Scriptures of the New Testament inform us, were restored in human nature through the redemption and grace of Christ, who was manifested for that purpose. The image restored was the image lost—was that in which Adam was created. The expressions employed by the penmen of the New Testament, plainly point out to us this method of proceeding. We read of the new man, which after God is created, (Eph. iv. 24,) and of man being renewed after the image of him that created him, (Col. iii. 10,) and the like. The use of the term *created* naturally refers us to man's first creation; and leads us to parallel that with his renovation or new creation, by which he re-obtained those excellencies possessed at the beginning, but afterwards unhappily forfeited; and whose are these, renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him? Put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, (Eph. iv. 24,) the holiness of, or according to, truth. The divine image then is to be found in the understanding which knows the truth, and in the will which loves it: for when the understanding judges that to

received him not. (John i. 11.) The Prince of peace; not only the mighty former of all things, who was before all things, by whom all things consist, but the Head of the church, the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself: by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. Of this more particularly hereafter.

be true which with God is true, the man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him; when the will loveth the truth, and all its affections move in the pursuit and practice of it, the man is new created after God in righteousness and holiness.

CHAPTER IV.

WE will now proceed to the object of inquiry, from which the foregoing comments on the passage in Isaiah have somewhat led us to deviate. In the gospel according to St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, record is given that at the baptism of Christ a voice from heaven proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not : but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God ;" adding, "I indeed baptize with water, but there standeth one among you whom ye know not ; He it is, who coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."

In this recital, we have the concurring testimony of each evangelist to the divinity of the Saviour ; for we may fairly conclude, a voice from

heaven would never have proclaimed him the Son of God, in any sense short of his being a full participator of the divine nature; as no such proclamation was ever given respecting angels; and our blessed Lord himself has told us, that among those that are born of women, there never was a greater than John the Baptist; therefore, had the appellation of Son of God been ever conferred on any other human being than the man Christ Jesus, as a mark of distinction and pre-eminence, none could have been more worthy of this title than John the Baptist. But on the contrary, He it is who most specially disclaims all pretensions to equality with the Lamb of God; for when Jesus came to be baptized in Jordan, John forbade him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" He commenced his ministry by declaring, there cometh one mightier than I after me; He must increase, but I must decrease. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father: He hath declared him. The taunting attestation of the infernal chieftain we often find repeated, "If thou be the Son of God," &c.; for it is written, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee." (Matt. iv.) And again, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God? I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God." "Then they that were in the ship, came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth, thou art the Son of God." (Matt. xiv. 33.) This is far from being a solitary instance of Jesus Christ accepting and receiving homage from men on earth.

Had not the fulness of Divinity dwelt incarnate in the man Christ Jesus, (but it did please the Father, we are assured, that in him should all fulness dwell,) He would doubtless have reproved such homage being paid him, as did the prophetic angel from the apostle John; "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." (Rev. xxii. 9.) Nothing but Deity can be entitled to worship. "Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." (Matt. xvi. 16.) "Last of all he sent unto them his Son." (Matt. xxi. 37.) Thus speaking of him as completely pre-eminent to all other messengers. "Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross, and we will believe. He trusted in God, for He said I am the Son of God:" (Matt. xxvii. 40—43:) while suspended in torture He still asserted that He was the Son of God. "And there came a voice from heaven saying, Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (Mark i. 11;) "And there was a cloud overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him." (Mark ix. 7.) At this illustrious juncture Elias and Moses appeared unto the apostles, and talked with Jesus, but no such attestation was given respecting them. "And the high-priest said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said

I am," (Matt. xxvi. 63; Mark xiv. 61.) The immediate consequence of thus perseveringly declaring the greatness of his rank was ignominy and torture. "The high-priest rent his clothes, and said, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy, what think ye? and they all condemned him to be guilty of death." But though man refused belief, nature extorted it. "When the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." (Matt. xxvii. 54.) "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest;" (Luke i. 32;) "that holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke i. 43.) "The Son abideth in the house for ever." (John viii. 35.) "And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John vi. 69.) "He said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him." (John ix. 35—38.) Had He not been the Son of God, in a sense quite different from that of any other inspired messenger, the declaration would have been absolute equivocation. "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." (John xvi. 27.) "Father, the

hour is come ; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John xvii. 1, 5.) " These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." (John xx. 31.) " And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went : and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest ? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me ? and he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the Scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter ; and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth : in his humiliation his judgment was taken away : and who shall declare his generation ? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee of whom speaketh the prophet this ? of himself, or of some other man ? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they

came unto a certain water ; and the eunuch said See, here is water : what doth hinder me to be baptized ? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (Acts viii. 26—37.)

This recital contains an account of a person high in the estimation of his royal mistress ; but at the same time possessed of a much higher honour, high in the estimation of his God. Though advanced by the former to the summit of worldly ambition, the full confidence of his queen and sovereign, yet the splendid appointment by her conferred upon him did not prevent his piety towards God, or his diligent inquiry after truth. These were eminently rewarded by the Most High : an angel was despatched with directions to Philip, who immediately put that highly important question, " Understandest thou what thou readest ?" The eunuch naturally answered, how could he, without some man should guide him ; and, rejoicing in the hope of now obtaining the much-longed for exposition, desired Philip to come up and sit with him, praying to know of whom the prophet spoke, whether of himself or some other man. Then Philip opened his mouth, and preached unto him Jesus. And what was the result ?—The eunuch believed with all his heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Philip must have so preached Jesus, as to have fully convinced him that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, in a way totally differing from any other man or any other being. He must have convinced him, that during the probationary humiliation of the Son of

God, (but of this, more particularly hereafter,) He dwelt incarnate in the man Christ Jesus; or the belief he had just instilled into him was, in fact, no belief at all; and the declaration it produced would have been merely equivocal, had not Jesus Christ been the Son of God, in a way completely overpowering, and bearing down the sense in which this appellation was ever otherwise applied. Upon the miraculous conversion of St. Paul, he straightway preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God: (Acts ix. 20 :) and the above remarks are equally applicable to this Scripture as to that just stated: "I live by the faith of the Son of God." (Gal. ii. 20.) "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son." (iv. 4.) "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." (Eph. iv. 13.) "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. i. 13.) "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when He had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, 'Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?' And again, I will be to him a

Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels He saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. i.) In this chapter, the point into which we are now inquiring is fully argued, and completely established. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant: but Christ, as a son over his own house." (iii. 5, 6.) "Seeing, then, that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." (iv. 14.) "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore." (vii. 28.) "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God." (x. 28.) "For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven,

we heard when we were with him in the holy mount." (2 Peter i. 17, 18.) "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 3.) "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father:" (ii. 23, 24 :) "and this is the commandment of God, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God.

And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Amen." (1John iv. v.) "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, in truth and love. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." Except we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, it is impossible to rightly appreciate the love of God towards us. But on the most consoling and important considerations deducible from the establishment of this essential point of Christian belief, we propose to separately and distinctly treat: we shall only here remark, that to impress the necessity of assent to this doctrine appears to have been the motive which stimulated this venerable, peculiarly amiable, and highly distinguished, beloved apostle, to the so frequent repetition and energetic enforcement of the belief in this most important article of the Christian creed. And he by his own declaration clearly proves, that he considered the acknowledgment of this truth as the most secure preservation against the attacks of scepticism with which revealed religion, from its earliest promulgation in our world, was destined to cope. These things have I written to

you concerning them that seduce you, (namely, many antichrists,) fearing that his much-loved disciples might be alienated from the right faith through them.

The foregoing recapitulation, selected from so many different parts of the sacred volume, written by so many different inspired authors previous to and subsequent to the introduction of Christianity on earth, does, we think, fully and incontrovertibly answer the inquiry which occasioned this research, by clearly asserting that Jesus Christ, according to the whole tenor and declarations of the Scriptures, is the Son of God, in a manner entirely paramount and superior to any other intelligent throughout the boundless universe.

We shall next examine the holy records, as to the equality of the Son with the Father: and first, respecting his nature. God himself is, we know, a Spirit: (John iv. 24;) Christ is also a Spirit; (1 Cor. xv. 45;) man is a living soul, but Christ a quickening Spirit, of the same nature with the paternal Deity as an earthly son is with an earthly parent: a full participator of the divine nature: for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself, (John v. 26:) the same vital principle and power of imparting life, as dwells inherent in the great I Am. Christ was that spiritual Rock which of old sustained the Israelites. (1 Cor. x. 4.) The salvation into which the prophets inquired and diligently searched, “when prophesying of the grace that should come, searching what, or what

manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven ; which things the angels desire to look into." (1 Pet. i. 10—12.)

This recital not only powerfully illustrates the equality of the Son of God with his Almighty Father—for the Spirit of Christ was the spirit of prophecy—but also his high superiority over the angels (though they are also spirits :) in it we find the mighty Lord of angels testifying by his Spirit things concerning himself, unto agents greatly inferior to angels, even the prophets on our earth ; the greatest among whom is less than the least in the kingdom of heaven, and the angelic hierarchies (of the highest orders, as appears from the hallowed types,) in deep humility desiring earnestly to look into and comprehend those revelations which the Spirit of Christ was pleased to impart unto beings so very inferior unto themselves. And in the quotation just inserted from the Hebrews, we find all angels commanded to bless and worship Christ, who is head over all things ; over all principality and power : " angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him." (1 Pet. iii. 22.) " Let us make man, (Gen. i.) implies equality ; every type of heavenly things connected with the glorious Son of God, depicteth royalty : the table on which is

placed the symbolic bread of life, and the incense altar, are both surmounted with a crown of gold. The prophecy of Balaam foretells a star and sceptre—a star denotive of a celestial sceptre. The whole of the forty-fifth Psalm is entirely correspondent with the description already transcribed from the first chapter of the Hebrews: “Thou art fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king’s (of God the Father’s) enemies, whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, (evidently proving that God before spoken of was God the Son, one with the Father,) hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. King’s daughters were

* There is one God and Father, of whom are all things: therefore, the one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, may in this sense, as proceeding forth from God, be denominated a fellow with God’s vast intellectual offspring, who all derive their origin from the same One source. And he professed himself not ashamed even to call us brethren: he is fellow with God in his divine nature, and fellow with all intelligents, as deriving his existence from him.

among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of ophir. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy Father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for He is thy Lord; and worship thou him." "And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth." (Isa. ii. 19.) This prophecy must mean the glory of the majesty of God the Son; being parallel to that contained in the Apocalypse, wherein it is said that the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, will hide themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and will say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, (whom various Scriptures assert to be Christ,) and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? (Rev. vi. 15—17.) For he will smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall He slay the wicked. (Isa. xi. 4.) And as the preceding verses of the chapter last quoted show that it is Messiah who will smite the earth, and slay the wicked; it also proves that it is the glory of the majesty of God the Son which ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In the 9th chapter of Isaiah, 6th verse, our blessed Saviour is distinctly termed the mighty God; clearly describing God the Son in-

vested with Almighty power, as is God the Father, “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God ;” (Isa. xl. 3 ;) and we have already found the voice of the paternal Deity declaring unto him who was ordained to prepare the way for God the Son, that He whose way he did prepare was his beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased. Then follows verse the 5th : “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together ; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” 8th verse : “The word of our God shall stand for ever.” “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.” (John i. 1.) “Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God ! behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him : behold his reward is with him, and his work before him.” (Isa. xl. 9.)

This prophecy again is parallel to one in the Revelations, last chapter, 12th verse : “Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me ;” and proves that the Lord God before spoken of was Christ the Son of God. “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd ; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” Verse the 12th, and all the ensuing ones of this chapter appear in continuation to speak of God the Son, and are applicable unto him as the glorious first-born of every creature, by whom all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth,

visible and invisible ; who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. “ Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts ; (setting the Redeemer the Lord of hosts, on an equality with the Lord the King of Israel ;) I am the first, and I am the last ; and besides me there is no God.” (Isa. xlv. 6.) This passage is couched in very remarkable phraseology, speaking separately, first of the Lord the King of Israel ; and secondly, of his Redeemer the Lord of hosts ; and then immediately uniting these two in one, I am the first, and I am the last ; and besides me there is no God—exactly corresponding with the assertions of the Redeemer unto his servant John, “ I am the first, and I am the last : I am he that liveth and was dead ; and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen.” “ Thus saith the Lord, the holy One of Israel, and his Maker, (that is, God the Father,) Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me. I have made the earth, and created man upon it ; I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways : he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts.” (Isa. xlv. 11—13.) And many more passages well worthy of notice on this point may be selected in the

prophecy of Isaiah; but that contained in chap. lxiii. is too illustrious to be passed over: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save," (for God hath laid help upon One that is mighty;) his own arm hath brought salvation to him. The 9th verse clearly answers the inquiry: that it was the Saviour, who in all the affliction of his children was afflicted; and who in his love and his piety redeemed them. And Jeremiah asserts, (l. 34.) that the Redeemer is strong, the Lord of hosts is his name. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit." (Dan. vii. 9.) Thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

The Ancient of days here spoken of, unquestionably means God the Son; for "God hath committed all judgment to the Son;" (John v. 22;) and in chap. ix. 24, Messiah is called the Most Holy. "The desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." (Haggai ii. 7.) "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man who is the Branch (the man in whom the Lord of hosts was to become incarnate;) and He shall grow up out of his place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord: even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and He

shall be a priest upon his throne : and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zech. vi. 12, 13.) "A glorious high throne from the beginning, is the place of our sanctuary." (Jer. xvii. 12.) And in the Psalms and Hebrews it is recorded, The Lord swears, and will not repent ; thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec. Awake my sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. That is the man in whom God the Son was pleased to become enveloped ; whom God declares his fellow ; who is fellow with God the Father, in the glory of his nature : for He is the brightness of his glory, fellow in his eternity ; for He is alpha and omega, and fellow in omnipotence : for all things that the Father doeth, doeth the Son also, whom God addresses as his fellow. For unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; (Hebrews i. 8 ;) who with the Father is one universal King. For there is one Lord, and his name one ; (Matt. xi. 11 ;) and they fell down and worshipped him. The magi, who had been supernaturally directed by the leading of a star, it must be presumed, were also supernaturally instructed to acknowledge that Deity was incarnate in the child, before whom they fell down and worshipped ; for, as before observed, nothing but Deity can be a proper object for worship. All things are delivered unto me of my Father : and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son ; (xi. 27 ;) thus representing the Father and the Son in terms of

complete equality. (xiii. 41 ; xxiv. 31 ; and Mark xiii. 27.) Christ denominates the angels his angels ; foretelling, that at the last great awful day He will send his angels forth ; but in Luke xii. 8, and John i. 51, He calls them the angels of God. In this instance also, proving his equality with the paternal Deity ; and that the holy angels were equally under the command of God the Son as of God the Father. “ My house shall be called an house of prayer,” (Matt. xxi. 13,) assertive of Deity. “ And when they saw him, they worshipped him : but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name (not names, in the plural—but name, in the singular) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;* (xxviii. 17—20 ;) thus speaking distinctly, though in terms of equality, of each person in the glorious Trinity, and then comprising them in one, by commanding that all nations be baptized in the name of these three Persons : “ teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and lo ! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

The Son of God must therefore be omnipresent. The essentiality of this attribute may be indeed deduced from his being gifted with all power both in heaven and in earth ; as the universal government God has laid upon his shoulders could not be exercised were He not omnipresent ;

* The Holy Ghost will be a distinct object of inquiry.

nor could he claim that equality with his Almighty Father, which He so unequivocally asserts, were He not fully endowed with that essential attribute: He saw Nathaniel before that Philip called him; (John i. 48;) at a distance viewed the death of Lazarus; and wheresoever two or three are gathered together in his name He is in the midst of them. (Mark ii. 7.) Who can forgive sins but God only?—This just opinion was far from being controverted by our blessed Lord, and accompanied by miraculous demonstration, that ye may know that the Son of Man (when acting in conjunction with the Son of God,) hath power on earth to forgive sins, “He saith to the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house.”

In Luke ii. 9, we find a wonderful relation of circumstances attendant on the birth of Christ; such as never were or could be related respecting any other human being, except him in whom dwelt the incarnate Deity. And in verses 28, 29, and 30, pious Simeon blesses God, saying, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” The circumstances attendant on his death were as wonderful as those attendant on his birth. There was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour: and the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.*

* “That at the time when our Saviour died, there was a miraculous darkness, and a great earthquake, is recorded by Phlegon the Traillian, who was a Pagan, and freeman to Adrian the

And on the first day of the week when the disciples came to the sepulchre, they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre; and entering in found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabouts, behold two men stood by them in shining garments: and they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth. And certain women also of their company made them astonished, which were early at the sepulchre: and when they found not the body of the Lord Jesus, they came, saying that they had seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. “And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us: (that word, just before declared to have eternally existed, to have been with God from all eternity, and to be God, became incarnate in our nature;) and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John i. 14.) No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him; “He that cometh from above is above all;” (iii. 31;) “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.” (ver. 35.) “My Father worketh hitherto,

emperor. We may here observe, that a native of Trallium, which was not situate at so great a distance from Palestine, might very probably be informed of such remarkable events as had passed among the Jews in the age immediately preceding his own times; since several of his countrymen with whom he had conversed, might have received a confused report of our Saviour before his crucifixion, and probably lived within the shake of the earthquake and the shadow of the eclipse, which are recorded by this author.”—*Addison's Evidences*.

and I work." (v. 17.) Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because He said that God was his Father; making himself equal with God. The truth of this observation our blessed Lord was very far from controverting; but took therefrom occasion to explain unto them that although He did not disclaim equality either of power or glory with his Almighty Father, yet that He owed the derivation of both his power and glory to his Almighty Father. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for whatsoever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and He will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. (v. 19—23.) Not that any man hath seen the Father save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father." (vi. 46.) "But I know him, for I am from him;" (vii. 29;) I am from above, "I proceeded forth and came from God." (viii. 42.) "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than

all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.* Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of these works do you stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?"† (x. 27—36.) "He that

* "Now it is a most certain truth, that I and the Father are one; and the union between us is so strict and intimate in nature, as well as in affection and design, that his Almighty power is mine, to be employed for the defence of my sheep; and no one can deprive them of eternal life, without prevailing against him as well as me: I and the Father are one. If we attend not only to the obvious meaning of these words in comparison with other passages of Scripture, but to the connexion of this celebrated text, it so plainly demonstrates the Deity of our blessed Redeemer, that I think it may be left to speak for itself without any laboured comment. How widely different that sense is, in which Christians are said to be one with God (John xvii. 21) will sufficiently appear, by considering how flagrantly absurd and blaspheming it would be to draw that inference from their union with God, which Christ does from his."—*Doddridge*.

† "Jesus not judging it proper at that time to bring the sublime doctrine of his Deity into farther debate, answered them, Is it not written in your law, or in those sacred books which you own to be of divine original; (Ps. lxxxii. 6;) where it is plain the persons that are spoken of are princes and magistrates: I have said, ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High.

seeth me, seeth him that sent me." (xii. 45.) "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you,

Now if the Psalmist thus applied this character, and it appears he called them gods to whom the word of God then came, merely with regard to that office which by divine designation they bore, (and certainly, the Scripture cannot be broken, nor can you with any show of reason pretend to censure the propriety of those expressions which a divinely-inspired writer has used,) how is it then that you are so offended now? Or, how do you pretend to say concerning him whom the Father hath so solemnly sanctified or set apart to this great work, in his eternal counsels, and whom He at length has sent into the world under such an exalted character, 'Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?—when you allow there is a sense in which oppressive magistrates may be honoured by such a title—when you allow magistrates,' &c. A late learned and pious paraphrast apprehends, that our Lord here vindicates his claim to supreme divinity, by pleading that the Jewish rulers are called gods; not in a general regard to their office as rulers, but as types of the Messiah, the great Sovereign of the church, who (as it is expressed at the close of this eighty-second Psalm) was to inherit all nations. But not to urge that it seems improbable, that such wicked magistrates as are there spoken of should be described as types of Christ, this explication seems to imply that every person whose office was typical of the Messiah might be called a god: and on the other hand, that a creature being called by that name, would intimate that he was a typical person; the consequences of which, I am sure, that worthy writer would abhor. (Compare 2 Cor. iv. 4.) I think myself, therefore, obliged to acquiesce in that plain and natural sense of the passage, which the generality of commentators both ancient and modern, have given. Jesus was charged here by the Jews with ascribing divinity to his human nature; and in reply to this, He showed that calling himself the Son of God did not imply that; and that his works proved such an union with the Divinity as He had before asserted, than which no answer could have been more wise and pertinent." "And when I claim this character, and speak so highly of myself, I do not expect to be credited merely on my own affirmation; if I do not

and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (xiv. 9.) "All things that the Father hath are mine." (xvi. 15.) "Be not faithless, but believing." "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." (xx. 27.) "Grace to you, and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is over all gods, blessed for ever." (Rom. i. 7 ; ix. 5.) "Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ;" (1 Cor. i. 3;) clearly implying equality. 2 Cor. i. 2, contains the same words. "Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father:" "Grace be unto you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. i. 1, 3.) "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus

the works of my Father, such glorious works as could not be performed by any but a divine agent, believe me not; but if it be apparent that I do such works, though you believe not me, and am regardless of my own testimony in the case, yet, at least, believe the mighty works that I perform, and let the evidence of these remove the prejudices you have entertained; that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me and I in him, by such an union as abundantly justifies the expression, which seems to give you such peculiar offence. Then though they knew not what to answer him, the Jews were so enraged against him, that they sought again to seize him, that they might accuse him of blasphemy before the sanhedrim; but He withdrew himself as He had done before, in an extraordinary manner, and so escaped out of their hands. (Compare Luke iv. 30, sect. 32; and John viii. 59, sect. x. 5.)"—*Dod. Ex.* vol. ii. p. 228, 229.

Christ." (Eph. i. 2 ; vi. 23.) " Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 2.) " The supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ : " (ver. 19.) " Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus ; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." (ii. 5, 6.) " Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ ; " (Col. i. 2.) " who is the image of the invisible God." (ver. 15.) " For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, that your hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love ; and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power." (Col. ii. 1—10.) " Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ : grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. i. 1.) " Now God himself, and our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you." (iii. 11.) " Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in

God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: grace be," &c. (2 Thess. i. 1.) "When the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ." (ver. 7, 12.) "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." (ii. 16, 17.) "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ which is our hope; unto Timothy, my own son in the faith; grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Tim. i. 1, 2.) "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." (iii. 16.) "Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen or can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen." (vi. 16.) "Grace," &c. (2 Tim. i. 2.) "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ." (iv. 1.) "Grace," &c. (Tit. i. 4.) "Adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (ii. 10, 13.) The epistle of Paul to Philemon, (ver. 3.) "Grace to you," &c.

In the epistle of Paul to Titus, first bishop of the church of the Christians, he exhorts him to hold fast the faithful word as he had been taught,

that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers: for there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake; wherefore, rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men that turn from the truth.

These considerations may have powerfully suggested the necessity of writing, as Dr. Doddridge well distinguishes it, that celebrated epistle the epistle to the Hebrews: "It was written," as he continues to observe, "to the converts to Christianity from Judaism, who were almost incessantly persecuted by their unbelieving brethren (such, probably, as those described by St. Paul to Titus—it may be in part the very men) who tenaciously adhered to the constitution and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, which Christianity superseded. Now the manifest design of St. Paul in this epistle is to confirm the Jewish Christians in the faith and practice of the gospel, of which they might be in danger of deserting, either through the insinuations or ill treatment of their persecutors."* And the method wisely adopted in their particular case is, directing their attention to the Scriptures they held sacred, by references to them, and to their legal types, showing that these are now fulfilled in Christ.

This most highly important epistle commences

* Dod. Ex. vol. vi. p. 5.

by declaring unto the Jewish converts, that “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners (as they well knew and acknowledged) spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things :* by whom also He made the worlds ;” enforcing upon their minds, and imprinting on their recollections the truths before asserted by St. John, namely, that by his Son God made the worlds ; that without him was not any thing made that was made ; and which St. Paul had so emphatically impressed on the memory of the Colossian converts, unto whom he declares, that by him—that is, God the Son—all things were created ; reminding them also of his high supremacy over the angels, according with, and corroborative of his assertions to the Ephesians ; unto whom he testifies that Christ is set down at the right hand of God in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, that He might fill all things. And though it was written that God gave his angels charge concerning him, at the humiliating juncture of his incarnation ; (Ps. xc. 7 ;) yet at the same time, when He brought his first-begotten into the world, He saith, “ Let all the angels of God worship him ;” which command, at the termi-

* These truths are, under a parabolical form, asserted by our blessed Saviour himself, (Matt. xxi. 33,) wherein is described the treatment of the prophets ; and that last of all, the householder sent his son, saying, They will reverence my son : but when the husbandmen saw him, they said, This is the heir.

nation of his arduous conflict with the foul fiend, we find fulfilled : for behold, angels came and ministered unto him, their great Almighty Lord, the Maker of all things in heaven and in earth, both visible and invisible ; thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places ; and angels, authorities, and powers, we are expressly told, are made subject unto him. Of the angels indeed, He saith, “ Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flaming fire.” (Ps. civ. 4.) But unto the Son he saith, “ Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity ; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” (Ps. xlv. 67.)* “ But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool ?” (Ps. cxi.)

It was from this passage in the Psalms that our blessed Lord himself was pleased to assert his own divinity ; for as Wisdom itself observed, “ If David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. If David then call him Lord, how is He his Son ?” If therefore He was the Son of God, and a full participator of the divine nature, He was equal with

* Fellow, in one sense, with every rational intelligent throughout the boundless universe, as deriving his power from the parent source of all perfection ; but high and infinitely superior to all other intelligents, by all power being communicated to him by God the Father, and doing all things which He doeth.

God, high above the angels : and this attestation to his divinity, (and consequent equality with the Father,) just inserted in the foregoing quotations, we find recorded by three separate writers, and in three distinct books of the Scriptures, the Psalms, the Gospels, and the epistle to the Hebrews. “Are not the angels all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them ; (Ps. xxxiv. 7 ;) these angels of his that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. (Ps. ciii. 20.) Thousand thousands minister unto him, ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him ; (Dan. vii. 10 ;) therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip : for if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, that law received by the disposition of angels—that law, of which Moses so solemnly reminded them—for “this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death, when he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them ; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints : from his right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people ; all his saints are in thy hand : and they sat down at thy feet ; every one shall receive of thy words. Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.” (Deut. xxxiii. 1—4.) If every transgression and disobedience of the

word spoken of by these received a just recompense of reward, how would they escape, if they neglect the great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto them by those that heard him? "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, with respect of persons." (James ii. 1.) "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ the chief Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." (1 Pet. ii. 5.) "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto to him." (1 Pet. iii. 22.) "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." (2 Pet. i. 2.) "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down his life for us." (1 John iii. 16.) "The only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 4.) "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, one like unto the Son of man clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the

sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not, I am the first and the last: (a parallel assertion to that contained in Isa. xliv. 6: Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of Hosts, I am the first and I am the last; and besides me there is no God.) I am He (the Redeemer) that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for ever more. Amen."* (Rev. i. 12—18.) "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." (iii. 14.) "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (v. 13.) "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head

* A parallel with these descriptions will be found Ezek. i. 26: "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake."

were many crowns ; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but He himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood ; and his name is called The Word of God (and the word we know is God.) And He hath on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." (xix. 11—13, 16.) "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; (that is, God the Son ;) and the books were opened, and the dead were judged ;" (xx. 12 ;) and they, we know, are to be judged by God the Son ; " And he that sat upon the throne, said, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." (xxi. 1.) "And there came unto me one of the seven angels, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, and her light was like a stone most precious." (xxi. 9.) "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it : for the glory of the God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (xxi. 22, 23.) "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." (Isa. xxiv. 22, 23.) "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Rev. xxii. 1.) "For the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it ; and his servants shall serve him ; and they shall see his face." (xxii. 3.) "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and

the last." (xxii. 13.) I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly;* Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." (xxii. 16, 18—21.)

* By "quickly," as spoken by an eternal Being, unto whom a thousand years are but as yesterday, we are incompetent to judge how near the time may be.

CHAPTER V.

THE attestations of the various Scriptures just inserted, as to the equality of the Son of God with his Almighty Father, collected like our former recapitulations from so many different inspired authors, handed down by such discordant parties as those of Jews and Christians, (and the testimony of the former is quite and to the full as ample as that of the latter on this last subject of inquiry,) does, we think, fully answer the point in question, by proving that God the Son, according to the whole tenour and perfectly harmonious declarations of Scripture, from the commencement to the conclusion thereof, is equal with God the Father; and that it is an attempt utterly at variance with right reason, to disprove this doctrine by imputing its origin to the misconception of some particular passages of Holy Writ, and an erroneous interpretation of strong oriental idioms. For after the most diligent and scrupulous research, we cannot discover any one passage in the sacred records diminishing the full force of the just stated scriptural assertions respecting this equality, excepting those produced by the superiority necessarily existing between a

giver and receiver,—between the great I am, the great, self-existing Being who in himself concentrates all perfection,—between the great inherent source of all perfection, and him to whom perfection it imparts. And this superiority, He who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, uniformly himself asserts; “My Father is greater than I.” The giver is greater than the receiver, though, if it please the giver, he can impart equality of greatness to a beloved receiver, making him one with his adored self in greatness, glory, power: and that it has pleased the Father thus to invest the Son the Scriptures plainly tell, for it has pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. The Son of God avows, “I can of myself do nothing;” but he likewise asserts, “That the Father sheweth him all things that himself doeth; that whatsoever he doeth so also may the Son;” though He justly styles paternal Deity his Father and his God, and owneth his dependance by prayer to him as such, He being the source from whence proceed his existence, attributes, and powers. Yet He also declares, that He and the Father are one; that as the Father hath life in himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself; that as the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. And the distinction in the mode of address between the Father and the Son is well worthy observation: paternal Deity addresses filial Deity

as his equal, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever ;’ but filial Deity acknowledges the superiority of the Imparter of his glory, and also his dependance, by addressing God in prayer. But through eternity He has ever worked with his Almighty Father ; He has neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but abideth the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He, therefore is eternal ; He dwelt in glory with his Father before our visible creation was called into existence, (John xvii. 5,) and without him was not any thing made that was made, whether they be things in heaven or things in earth, visible or invisible ; for there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in all, as the apostle admirably defines it : one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him ; and this high office of Creator does, by the stupendous acts which he as such performs, fully justify a former position, namely, that the offices Christ fills, and the acts which He performs, exemplify Omnipotence.

St. Paul’s most fervent prayer for his beloved charge is, That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words ; the Almighty Son lies in the bosom of his omniscient Father ; and the Spirit of his

omniscient Father resteth upon him: "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." There appears one act alone of faith whereby it pleases the paternal Deity to exercise the faith of his beloved Son, for He is not only his Father, but He is his God, (because from God the Father He deriveth all things;) "the times and the seasons He hath put in his own power." (Acts i. 7.) The day determined on for final consummation remaineth an impenetrable secret in the omniscient mind of the paternal Deity; "of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." But this subtracts not from the Son's divinity, or his omnipotence. Faith in his omniscient Father cannot impede the exercise of absolute authority, (John v. 27,) cannot impede his exercising that universal government God lays upon his shoulder; for He is embosomed in his omniscient Father, and him He heareth always; (John xi. 42;) and from him He knoweth all things. (John xvi. 30.) He foretold the dread events of the last awful day, and needeth not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man; He searcheth the hearts and reins; (Rev. ii. 23;) and we have already found the spirit of Christ the spirit of prophecy: for the Father is ever with him; because the Son does ever those things that please the Father. He is the great probationary, the tried foundation stone; who though He were a Son, yet learned

He obedience by the things He suffered : faith in his God and Father supported him in the dark hour of anguish, when He was forsaken by his Father. In that most dismal hour, He trusted in his God, and set thereby an everlasting pattern to all probationaries : but though in our feeble nature, the glorious Son of God sustained a state of trial, it does not in the least degree detract from the glory of his divinity.

As to comment here upon this part of the subject, would lead us into too wide a field, we must reserve our observations for a future page, and only now remark, that as a prophet, Christ foretold events which could not have been foretold except by him, (or those whom He inspired,) who was in counsel with Omnipotence, which could not have been fulfilled but by Omnipotence.

The only scriptural quotation that will be now inserted in confirmation of the truths just stated, is from the prophet Micah, ver. 2 : “ But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me who is to be ruler in Israel ; whose goings forth have been of old from everlasting.” And this assertion also proves the eternity of our Almighty Saviour : and we shall hereafter have occasion to point out more holy records, which are equally decisive on the question we have canvassed. The divinity of the Son of God, and equality with his high heavenly Father, having from Scripture been incontrovertibly established, we do thereby obtain an answer to the inquiry which occasioned this research.

It was the filial Deity, the eternal omnipotent Son of God, one with the paternal Deity, who assumed the lofty tone of demanding of his Father an entrance for his purchased church within the hallowed veil, to dwell for ever in the heavenly Jerusalem. It is much more in consonance with right reason to conclude, that a revelation sent from heaven should contain communications far beyond the reach of unassisted reason to discover, than that it should not do so: and from our last examination of the sacred memorials has been elicited the existence of a glorious being, coequal, coeternal with the parent source of good.* But scriptural declaration comprises further wonder: by the solemn form of baptism ordained by the filial Deity, we find the existence of a third blessed Person very clearly proclaimed; for the last command enjoined by our adored Lord runs thus: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" and by thus naming the latter in terms of equality conjointly with the Almighty Father and the Almighty Son, without any circumstance of inferiority thereunto attached, excepting that announced by the order of procession, we find the Godhead described as consisting of three hallowed blessed Persons; and this holy, initiatory rite of baptism was by the Son of God ordained as a perpetual standing law. "Having redeemed man-

* This inquiry has fulfilled the promise of endeavouring to ascertain in what light Christ designed us to understand his declaration of being the Son of God.

kind, and thereby acquired a new and special claim to their homage and service, He entered upon and took possession of his purchased inheritance; and for what end?—plainly that He might bring all nations, thus made his own by right of redemption, to the knowledge and worship of the true God; to a knowledge of his nature, and the manner of his existence: and how is this done?—why by making them acquainted in the very first instance with the obligations conferred upon them by three ever blessed Persons, called by the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. These three Persons therefore, thus related and thus named, constitute that one true God, into whose name, faith, and profession, people of all the nations of the earth were to be baptized: for all nations were commanded to be baptized in the name of the three Persons, in the same manner, therefore surely in the same sense as in the name of one; the form running ‘in the name,’ not names, but in the singular number, name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: thereby in the strongest manner describing their power equal, their persons undivided, their glory one.”* And the benediction pronounced by St. Paul does equally invoke the aid of these three hallowed Persons. “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.” (2 Cor. xiii. 14.)

This wonderful revelation, we must acknowledge, does compel us to invert the rule laid down

* Horne.

at the commencement of these pages ; for that the Godhead should consist of a plurality of persons, is a communication far beyond the reach of unassisted reason to discover, (and consequently, as far beyond the power of unassisted reason to invent :) our inquiry, therefore, respecting the Trinity, cannot as heretofore consist in tracing the coincidence between the conclusions suggested by reason, with the assertions contained in the Scriptures ; but in endeavouring to ascertain how far the assertions of Scripture are reconcilable with reason. Previous to our examination of these, we shall present our readers with a most invaluable auxiliary to this purpose, contained in a little book, entitled “*Devout Meditations, or a Collection of Thoughts upon Religious and Philosophical Subjects ; by the Honourable Charles How, Esq.,*” and which we now with the highest satisfaction transcribe.*

* “*A Rational Essay upon the Trinity.*”

This is copied from a third edition. The following are letters affixed to its publication :—

“*To Archibald Macauley, Esq.*”

“*KIND AND WORTHY SIR,*

“How shall I sufficiently thank you for the favour and honour of your very valuable present? The book of meditations I have read, and more than once, and I shall never lay it far out of my reach ; for a greater demonstration of a sound head and sincere heart I never saw. Dear Sir, I cannot but return to my favourite meditations, for, in truth, I am fond of them : I think you were a lucky man in meeting with the manuscript, and I know you are a worthy one, by bringing it to the press. The world is your debtor for it : my part of the debt I will pay as far

“In relation to the Trinity, I would have it considered whether unity of nature, or essence, and

as hearty thanks will go towards it, and I wish I could do more. But I am surprised that the author's name is suppressed, for I know no name to which that work would not do an additional credit; and why a man's modesty should rob him of his just honour, when by that honour his modesty can be no more offended, I know not. I wish you would consider this with regard to the future editions. I desire you, Sir, to insert me in the list of your friends, for such I am, and such I am obliged to be by your unexpected and merited favour.

“I am your's &c.

“1752.

“C. YOUNG.”

“*To Archibald Macauley, Esq., Lord Conservator.*

“HONOURED SIR,

“When this work first appeared, it was proposed to have the author's name prefixed to it; and now that a second edition is become necessary, and that you, Sir, and several other men of good judgment, particularly your friend Dr. Young, so well known to the world for learning, piety, and genius, have given it as your opinions, that to be known for the author of such a work would add reputation to any name, I have desired that it may be done; and as the public now know to whom they owe this performance, it has been thought just that they should also know to whom they owe the publication of it. The manuscript came to my late dear wife as executrix to the author, her grandfather, with whom she lived from her infancy to the time of his death; and it is evident from the work itself, as well as from what has been said in the advertisement to the first edition that he intended it for his own private use. As soon as you perused it at my house, from a principle of disinterested benevolence only, you earnestly desired it might be published, and took the whole trouble of it upon yourself; so that whatever praise is due for having rendered the closet exercises of a truly good man of public utility, that is justly yours;—though I at the same time know, that the inward satisfaction that you have already felt on this account is much superior to all applause. I have, at your

plurality of persons, are not necessary to absolute perfection ; at least, whether according to the best conjectures of human reason about a matter so far

desire, carefully compared the printed copy with the original manuscript in my possession, and corrected it in several places, which I hope will be of some advantage to this edition.

“ I am your’s, &c.

GEORGE MACAULEY.”

“*Poland Street, May 28, 1752.*”

“ADVERTISEMENT.

“The following work was only intended for the private use of the author, as appears from his first meditation, and during his lifetime nobody saw it. After his death, being in the possession of his grand-daughter, a gentleman nearly related to her by marriage read it, and being greatly pleased with it himself, obtained a copy of it, and her permission to publish it, judging that it might be of good use in an age wherein serious things are but too much neglected by all ranks of men. The author himself, who attained to the age of eighty-four years, was a gentleman of good fortune, and of a considerable family, which has been ennobled in several of its branches. He was born in Gloucestershire (though his family was of the shire of Nottingham) in the year 1661 ; and during the latter end of the reign of King Charles II. was much at court. About the year 1686 he took an opportunity of going abroad with a near relation, who was sent by King James II. ambassador to a foreign court. The ambassador died, and our author, by powers given him to that effect, finished the business of the embassy. He had the offer of being appointed successor to his friend in his public character, but disliking the measures that were then carried on at court, he declined it, and returned to England, where he soon married a lady of rank and fortune, who dying in a few years left behind her an only daughter. After his lady’s death he lived for the most part in the country, where he spent many of his latter years in a close retirement, consecrated to religious meditations and exercises. He was a man of good understanding, of an exemplary life, and cheerful conversation.”

beyond its reach, it does not seem highly probable that it is so. Infinite perfection undoubtedly belongs to the Deity, but whether that is consistent with unity of person and a solitary existence, is what I would now consider only in a rational manner, without any regard to revelation.

We can attain to the knowledge of most of the attributes of God, even to what is equal to a demonstration, by just deductions and inferences from what we find to be in ourselves. We are sensible of some small degree of power and wisdom in ourselves, from whence we most certainly conclude, that what we find imperfectly in such creatures as we are, must be most perfect in the Deity; and that, by consequence, Almighty power and infinite wisdom are attributes belonging to him. Since we can, by this manner of reasoning, enter so far into the knowledge of the Divine nature as to find out many of its perfections, why may we not, by the same method, discover something of the nature of its felicity? We agree that the felicity of friendship is one of the greatest blessings belonging to human nature; that an intimate affection between two friends with a conformity of temper, thoughts, and inclinations, is a great happiness of human life; and yet we perceive there is an exceeding imperfection in this happiness, from the separation and division of the persons, which necessarily obstructs that entire union and perfect communication of thought and affection which is requisite to a complete felicity. From hence we may reasonably infer, that the felicity of the Deity is rendered infinitely perfect

by a plurality of persons, between whom there is an exact harmony of thoughts, of will, and of affections, who are inseparable and indivisible, from a complete union of nature and essence, in one eternal, infinite, and glorious Being.

As to the number of persons necessary to supreme felicity, there is no foundation for human reason to determine any thing concerning it, and therefore we can come by revelation only to the knowledge of the number. This alone can confirm to us the former conjectures of our reason, by discovering that a Trinity of Persons united in essence, is what composes the felicity and perfection of the Deity. We may, by our reason, farther conceive concerning the eternal generation of the Son, and the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost, that since a Trinity of Persons is the perfection of the Deity, the Father necessarily exists not only eternally, but perpetually imparting his Divine nature to the Son, and that both the Father and the Son eternally and perpetually exist, imparting the Divine nature to the Holy Ghost; so that the Son receives his divine nature by a spiritual generation, or communication, from the Father, as the Holy Ghost receives his divine nature by a spiritual procession, or communication of it, from the Father and the Son. Had the existence of the Son been only from an act of the will of the Father, and the existence of the Holy Ghost only from an act of the will of the Father and the Son, we might have supposed a time before those acts of the will took place, and, by consequence, that the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Ghost was in

time. But when we take it for granted that the perfection of the Deity consists in the union of three Persons in one nature or essence, we must conclude that union to be necessary, perpetual, and eternal; as also the generation and procession to have been necessary, perpetual, and eternal. From hence it appears wherein consists the superiority of the Father, which is, in being the fountain and source of the Deity, and in communicating the divine nature to the Son, and jointly with him to the Holy Ghost; as the subordination of the Son consists in his receiving the divine nature from the Father, the subordination of the Holy Ghost in his receiving the divine nature from the Father and the Son. And hereby it is evident that the co-equality of the Son and of the Holy Ghost to the Father, consists in the full and complete participation and reception of the divine nature from him. Upon this foundation, we may securely worship and adore the ever blessed Trinity in unity,—One in perfect consent and harmony—One in perfect complacency and love, as well as in nature and essence, without danger of tritheism and idolatry.

I do not pretend to establish this way of reasoning as a foundation of faith, nor do I fix my faith upon the conclusions I have drawn from reason, (which can amount to no more than a rational probability;) I absolutely believe those conclusions no farther than they are supported and confirmed by Scripture, as understood by the catholic church. I only tried for my own satisfaction how nearly I could reconcile revelation and reason. The proposition from which all my

other inferences and conclusions seem to me clearly and naturally to flow, is what I should no otherwise regard than as a reasonable conjecture, (which might either be true or false,) were it not warranted from Scripture, which declares the Godhead to exist in three Persons united in one nature or essence; from whence I make no difficulty to conclude, that it is that particular mode of existence which constitutes the perfection and felicity of the Deity: and I think I may without presumption affirm, that in conjunction with infinite wisdom and Almighty power, infinite harmony and love are the felicity of the Deity, and completes its perfection. In calling this a rational essay, all I mean is, to show that the Trinity, as it is revealed in Scripture, is not a notion absurd or contradictory to our reason, which is too frequently objected to it."

It is wisely observed in this invaluable auxiliary to our proposed inquiry on the Trinity, that as to the number of Persons necessary to the supreme felicity, there is no foundation for human reason to determine any thing concerning it, and therefore we can come by revelation only to the knowledge of the number. This alone confirms to us the former conjectures of our reason, by discovering that a Trinity of Persons, united in essence, is what composes the felicity and perfection of the Deity.

We now proceed to our proposed investigation of the sacred Volume, respecting the rank and attributes of the third great Person in the glorious Trinity, therein denominated the Holy Spirit, or

the Holy Ghost, and, by the baptismal form, announced in terms of complete equality with God the Father and with God the Son. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." From the scriptural assertions already stated, it may be presumed that the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, was coadjutor with the Holy Father and the Holy Son in the glorious work of creation—a supposition many passages of Holy Writ will be found conspiring to confirm. "There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, and want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and my spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein." (Isa. xxxiv. 15—17.) That the worthies under the Old Testament were not altogether uninformed upon so important a point "as the nature of God, and the manners of his existence,"* may be reasonably supposed, and does indeed evidently appear, from the declarations therein contained. "Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the

* Horne.

upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy-seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord." (1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12.) That the Spirit here spoken of was the Holy Ghost, is evidently identified by the discourses of the apostle Peter; "Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake;" (Acts i. 16;)—the terms Holy Spirit and Holy Ghost, we thus find, are synonymous. "Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jehiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation;" (2 Chron. xx. 14;) "And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah;" (2 Chron. xxiv. 20;) "And he had understanding in the visions of the Lord;" (2 Chron. xxvi. 5.) In the Acts of the Apostles it is observed, (xxviii. 25,) "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet;" again identifying the Holy Ghost as the glorious agent employed by the Most High for the illumination of man. The Spirit of Christ, it is also said, is the Spirit of prophecy. That the Spirit of Christ is also the Spirit of prophecy, the following assertions of our blessed Lord do very plainly show. By the solemn rite of baptism we are, as before observed, baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, conjointly with the Almighty Father and the Almighty Son, without any circumstance of inferiority attached unto the latter, excepting that

announced by the order of procession. The circumstances which constitute the inferiority of the Son to the Father, we have already found to be alone produced by those necessarily existing between the paternal and the filial Deity, between a giver and receiver, between the parent Source of all perfection, the glorious Father of all lights, and him to whom perfection he imparts : and by examining the holy records, we shall find the circumstances which constitute the inferiority of the Holy Ghost to the Son, to be similar to those which constitute the inferiority of the Son to the Father. For though the consoling Spirit of truth proceedeth from the Father, as does the quickening Spirit of Christ, yet He, says our blessed Lord, (John xv. 26,) shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine. All things that the Father hath are mine ; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and show it unto you. The Holy Ghost, therefore, proceedeth from the Father and the Son, consequently is inferior to the Almighty Son upon the same account as is the Almighty Son unto the Almighty Father ; as He derives his attributes and powers from the Son of God, conjointly with the parent Source of good : and the Holy Ghost is in some places called the Spirit of the Father ; (Matt. x. 12 ;) in others, the Spirit of the Son : (Gal. iv. 6 :) He proceedeth from both.”*

The Spirit of Christ is, therefore, through the agency of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of prophecy ; and the Holy Spirit of truth is represented as the

* Horne.

glorious agent, sent forth conjointly by the glorious Father and the glorious Son. "Let not your hearts be troubled," said our blessed Lord, when just leaving of our world, "for I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you: but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things." But in a further passage, the Son assumes an equal power of sending forth the Holy Ghost, as that which he before ascribed to his hallowed Father: "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father. Now I go away to him that sent me, and sorrow hath filled your hearts; nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

These passages concur with the baptismal rite to prove the inferiority of the Holy Ghost to the glorious Son of God, by showing us that He derived his attributes and powers from the Son of God, conjointly with the parent Source of good. All things that the Father hath are declared to be the Son's: on that account He hath explained to us that the Holy Spirit takes of his, for the purpose of imparting unto us. And as we are expressly told, that the Holy Ghost was the Inspirer of both David and Esaias, we may with certainty conclude, that all the holy prophets were illumined by him; for with the great Illu-

minator is no variableness of operation, neither shadow of turning. (James i. 17.) But conclusions are superfluous; for Scripture plainly says, (2 Pet. i. 21,) that the holy men of old all spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and concerning spiritual gifts, St. Paul is most especially solicitous that we should not be ignorant. Wherefore he gives us to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed, and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost (that is, through the inspiration of this holy Agent.) Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord: and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God who worketh all in all; the same eternal Source of good, who with his Son and Holy Ghost worketh all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit withal; for to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit, to another working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will; (1 Cor. xii. ;) and he unto whose will the Father and the Son consign such mighty operations, must needs be a full participator of their divinity; must therefore be omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eter-

nal. As the Holy Ghost is the glorious Agent announced unto us, as empowered and employed conjointly with the mighty Son of God in working our salvation, we are with certainty assured, that He has worked hitherto, that is, throughout eternity with the eternal Father and the eternal Son; (for, as before observed, with the Father of all Lights is no variableness of operation :) thus corresponding with the glorious rank assigned the Holy Spirit in the solemn form of baptism; also, with the assertion contained in the first epistle of St. John, (iv. 7,) namely, that there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and that these three are one in nature, one in operation; and blasphemy against the least of these great three, can never be forgiven. Thou gavest also thy good spirit, testified against thee by thy spirit in the prophets. (Neh. ix. 20, 30.) “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence?” (Ps. cxxxix. 7.) “Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.” (cxliii. 10.) “There is no man hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit;” (Eccl. viii. 8;) for the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in; for wisdom is a loving Spirit. (Wisdom xv.) St. Paul declares, he speaks not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; and the wisdom that is from above and the fruit of the Spirit, are exactly synonymous. The first is “pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be en-

treated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy ;" (James iv. 17 ;) the latter "is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Gal. v. 22, 23.) This wisdom, and these graces, evidently proceed from the self-same Spirit of holiness, and are imparted unto us through sanctification of the Holy Ghost. (Rom. i. 4 ; xv. 16.) "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him ; and the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord : my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." (Isa. lix. 19—21.)

In these passages, the operation of the Redeemer and the Spirit are each noticed ; and again (lxiii. 9,) "In all their affliction He was afflicted ; in his love and in his pity He redeemed them ; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old ; but they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit ; therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them. Then He remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock ? where is He that put his Holy Spirit within him ? that led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before

them, to make himself an everlasting name? that led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.” “Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoaichin’s captivity, the word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him. And I looked, and behold a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man: (they were intelligent creatures, designed to represent the angels as executing God’s purposes; they were called cherubims—chap. x. 1.) And their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. (They were in a flying posture, to denote their readiness to obey the divine commands.) And they went every one straight forward: whither the Spirit was to go, they went. And when they went I heard the noise of their wings, like the

noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: (or the sound of their speech was as the sound of an host :) when they stood, they let down their wings,) hearkening and waiting for the word of command." And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood and had let down their wings. And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne (of which these angels were the supporters: these were doubtless the same cherubims with which St. John was honoured by a visionary view, when the heavenly door was opened unto him; and which he beheld in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne of God; but of these we have already treated,) as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it (man being the only intelligent that is known to us, was representative of the great Intelligent above upon it; as the Shekinah, or representation of the divine glory in the temple appeared above the cherubim higher than the angels.) And I heard a voice of one that spake, and he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, (put thyself in a posture of attention,) and I will speak unto thee. And the Spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me. Then the Spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing,* saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place—(from heaven,

* The manifestation of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost was ushered in by a sudden sound from heaven, as of a rushing

to which the vision was returning, by us his ministering spirits, who are now in the place where his glory dwelleth.) I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of a great rushing. So the Spirit lifted me up, and took me away by a lock of mine head; and the Spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God unto Jerusalem." (Ezek. i. ii. iii.)

In this sublime and wonderful revelation, from which we have selected the foregoing passages, we find nearly as frequent mention of the manifest operations of the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, as we even do in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, in which many particulars on this subject may be reasonably expected; as it commences by recording the fulfilment of the predictions that were to take place subsequent to the ascension of the glorious Son of God, when He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, (Eph. iv. 8;) when he sent down the promise of the Father upon the apostles (Luke xxiv. 49) whom He had chosen "to whom also He showed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs. And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high; but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of

mighty wind: and our Lord himself compares the regenerating operations of the Holy Ghost to the operations of the wind.

me. For John truly baptized with water ; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh ; on my servants, and on my handmaidens will I pour out in those days of my Spirit." (Acts i. ii.) This was the solemn juncture, when our blessed Lord promised to his afflicted followers the especial aid of the celestial Comforter ; for it was eminently wanted. " The apostles at this time were in a state of melancholy : sorrow had filled their hearts ; comfort was that of which they stood in need ; a Comforter was promised, and a Comforter was sent. Grief chills the heart, and congeals the spirits ; He descended therefore in fire to warm and to expand. He descended in the form of tongues, bringing the word of consolation, teaching them all things, and bringing all things to their remembrance their Lord had said to them. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, with spiritual gifts and comfort, with spiritual joy and exultation ; and what was the result ? Instead of fearing and flying from their

enemies as before, at the apprehension and crucifixion of their Master, they now boldly faced them, prepared to stand before rulers, to speak of God's testimonies even before kings, without being ashamed. They were no longer grieved or offended at the thought of suffering for the truth; they rejoiced in tribulations of that sort, and conceived themselves to have acquired a new dignity, when counted worthy to suffer. Such was the mighty change wrought in their minds through the power of the Holy Ghost the Comforter.*

Acts viii. 26: "The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip;" and in the 29th verse, "the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip" (a recital exactly parallel to those recorded in Ezekiel ix. 31.) Then had the churches rest, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied. "And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me. And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting." (Acts xi. 11, 12.) "In these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit." (ver. 27, 28.) "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia." (xiii. 2, 4.)

In these passages we find the Holy Ghost commanding as God, and acting as coadjutor with the

* Horne.

Almighty Father and the Almighty Son in the great work of redemption. "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia, and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they essayed to go into Bythinia: but the Spirit suffered them not." (xvi. 6, 7.) "And now, behold I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." (xx. 23.) "Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (ver. 28.) "And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle." (xxi. 11.)

During the humiliating incarnation of the hallowed Son of God, the agency of the Holy Ghost, it appeareth from New Testament relation, was ordained to administer to Christ. "After his baptism, as He went up straightway out of the water, lo! the heavens were opened unto him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The precursor of our blessed Lord had previously declared, that though he had indeed baptized with water to repentance, one mightier than he then stood among them, whom they knew not; whose shoe-latchets he was not

worthy to unloose; and that He would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. And upon Jesus coming to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him, John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness: then he suffered him. When man became polluted, God, as before observed, was pleased to ordain a figurative rite, an outward and visible sign, denotive of the absolute necessity of an inward cleansing, and of which washings in pure water was an appropriate type; covenanting with those who faithfully and in faith obeyed this injunction, that they should thereby receive such spiritual regeneration, as should cleanse them from their sins, and refit them for his favour. With this pure rite, our blessed Lord, who, as He was on earth enveloped in our humanity, thought fit to comply. The reason He assigned, namely, that thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness, and on his ascent from out the river Jordan, the Holy Spirit of God visibly descended in a dove-like form, and lighted upon him, accompanied by a celestial voice, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;—these were the blessed attestations given by the paternal Deity, of his acceptance of the means of ordinance. The immediate operations of the Holy Spirit next cited, are, “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.” The expression ‘being led,’ implies somewhat of reluctance to be led, by

the party who was led. But St. Mark (i. 12) records the same particular in much stronger terms : “ And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.” The awful juncture was now come, when the second Adam was to engage in his great Father’s business ; and, in the weak nature of the pristine Adam, to vindicate his glorious Father’s honour. It had yielded to the tempter it was now to withstand ; it had been conquered, but it was now to conquer. The filial Deity who acted now in contact with our frail mortality, had to combat with the innocent averse-ness inherent in all natures to suffering and conflict ; for previous to encountering the temptation of his malignant foe, our blessed Lord was ordained to endure a long abstinence from food ; and, while pressed with the cravings of a keen appetite, to repulse the insidious suggestions of the malicious tempter. All this our Saviour knew, and, as we are expressly told, that He took on him our infirmities,* there is good ground to conclude, that He took them on him in their extremest extent. Had He not done so, the victory of the frail nature which was to break the wily serpent’s head, could not have been deemed complete : for had feeble man in any instance been destined to struggle with temptation above our blessed Lord, it could not have with truth been said, that He was tempted in all points like to what man has been. But he drank the bitter cup

* Matt. viii. 17. This observation will be much more fully illustrated when we come to treat on Christ’s agony in the garden.

his beloved Father gave him down to the deepest dregs ; the work to be done was to be achieved by an infinite being ; and the magnitude of the work was to correspond with the infinitude of the infinite achiever. And Christ's temptation in the wilderness being a transaction which the sequel of the history proves was under the particular inspection of the angelic hierarchies,—as at its conclusion, we are told, they came and ministered to him ; and the very intent of Christ's mission being to glorify his Almighty Father in the sight of heaven,—there is just reason for concluding, that the superior penetration of these principalities and powers in heavenly places (who were so deeply interested in the issue of this great work) would enable them far more justly to appreciate the glorious magnanimity of the illustrious victor, than can enter into the heart of man to do. They had long beheld him seated on his high throne of glory, before he formed our world : and they must view with wonder his amazing love, his amazing condescension, in submitting to a transition involving him in so much misery, that he might make others happy. They knew that during his incarnation He was given in charge to them, and that if he prayed his Father, angelic legions were instantly at his command ; but, as our Lord observed, how then could Scripture be fulfilled ? He had, indeed, descended from the heaven, and took on him the form of a servant, but the remembrance of his former bliss and of his former glory, must have been ever present with him. On earth, he had in infancy been fos-

tered with every care maternal tenderness could show : when missed by Mary and his supposed father, they sorrowing returned unto Jerusalem, in anxious quest of him. He dwelt among his kinsfolk and acquaintance, and, till he commenced his public mission, was in favour with God and man. These were circumstances not calculated to inspire that stubborn hardihood which man sometimes displays ; and far less likely was the celestial wisdom, love, gentleness, and joy, with which he was replete, to arm him with that sturdy courage which man has often evinced.

These circumstances certainly tended to exasperate the severity of the contest ; and there is good ground to believe, that mortality never so experimentally uttered that lamenting exclamation, as did our blessed Lord, “ The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” But, however averse weak human nature was to sustain the arduous contest which stern duty now imperiously imposed, how timidly soever it now shrunk from and feared to face its foe, it was compelled to submit : for it was the woman’s seed which was to break the subtle serpent’s head. The deity within, and the deity without, goaded it into action ; dove-like as was the Holy Spirit of God, it allowed of no parley ; immediately it drove it into the frightful solitude,* and acting as coadju-

* This wilderness is thus described by a traveller of great credit and veracity, who had himself seen it : “ In a few hours,” says the writer, “ we arrived at that mountainous desert, into which our Saviour was led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil. It is a most miserable, dry, barren place, consisting of

tor with the incarnate Son of God, obtained full victory.

We are next informed, that when Jesus had fasted forty days and forty nights, that He was afterwards an hungered. It is certain that neither Moses, Elijah, or the human nature of the Messiah, could have sustained a fast of forty days, without some natural or supernatural support; but whatever assistance was in any of these cases, through either of these means vouchsafed, in the case of our Lord there is reason peculiarly to conclude, that it was merely sufficient for the preservation of life; and that at the expiration of this distressing trial, He was left in a worn-out and exhausted state: had He not laboured under

high, rocky mountains, so torn and disordered, as if the earth had suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned outward. On the left hand, looking down into a deep valley, as we passed along, we saw some ruins of small cells and cottages, which we were told were formerly the habitations of hermits retiring hither for penance and mortification; and certainly, there could not be found in the whole earth a more comfortless and abandoned place for that purpose.

“On descending from these hills of desolation into the plain, we soon came to the foot of mount Quarantania, which they say is the mountain from whence the devil tempted our Saviour with that visionary scene of all the kingdoms and glories of this world. It is, as St. Matthew calls it, an exceeding high mountain, and in its ascent difficult and dangerous. It has a small chapel at the top, and another about half way up, on a prominent part of a rock. Near this latter are several caves and holes in the sides of the mountain, made use of anciently by hermits, and by some at this day, for places to keep their Lent in, in imitation of that of our blessed Saviour.”—*Maundrell*.

Buckingham gives the same account of this wilderness.

every disadvantage such circumstances could produce, it would have deducted from the glory of the triumph He was ordained to obtain; and that the mortal frame of Christ was as liable as ours to bodily sufferance there is just reason to conclude; for we are expressly told, He not only took on him our infirmities, but bare our sicknesses. (Matt. viii. 17.)

There does, however, here occur an observation, which we cannot omit to state, namely, that in no instance did our blessed Lord ever augment his sufferings by self-imposed trials; * for in the instance now before us, the duty to be performed was plainly enjoined by his Almighty Father, who was pleased himself to bruise him, and who gave him the cup to drink; and seconded also by the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost. But Christ did not, like as we often do, resist the Holy Spirit, but suffered himself to be led by him, which, if we also do, we shall also conquer with him. It would be an impious supposition to imagine that it was only the semblance of sufferings which our Lord sustained, or that He ever appeared to suffer what He in reality did not: "God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." (Rom. iii. 4.) But there is a consideration which precludes the possibility of an unreal semblance. If truth is happiness, and falsehood misery, God must be true; were He not so, He would, instead of being the greatest, wisest, best, and happiest of beings, be the most false, the

* When we come to comment on Christ's crucifixion, we shall enter more particularly into this subject.

most wicked, and the most miserable of beings. He would impose upon intelligents burdens grievous to be borne, and touch them not himself with one of his fingers. But far differently does God deal with frail probationaries. For in all their affliction He is himself afflicted, and the very proof whereby is proved the love of God is, that He laid down his life for us. (1 John iii. 16.) The happiness of the blessed God of truth consisteth in his truth, and we have thereby strong consolation; "the truth of God is an immutable thing; it is impossible for God to lie." (Heb. vi. 18.) "Seeing then that we have a great high Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession; for we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. iv. 14—16.) The weak, exhausted state in which the Redeemer languished in the appalling wilderness, life sinking, and human nature craving for its natural support, exhibited an opportunity not to be lost by the malignant foe for exercising his deadly enmity unto the woman's seed. He did indeed well know, that it was the holy One of God who was incarnate in the weak envelope which he longed to torment; that it would ultimately prove victorious, and thereby break his head. (Gen. iii. 15.) Yet in the declarations made to sinning Eve, there was contained a further annunciation, too

gratifying to the evil one to be given up; for it was also said, that in the conflict with the second Adam, that he should bruise his heel; God thereby took the evil one in his own craftiness, (1 Cor. iii. 19,) and snared him in the work of his own hands. (Psalms ix. 16.) The contest did, indeed, essentially involve the high contestor in suffering and death; and had it not done so, no triumph had been gained.

Under the very propitious circumstances we have just surveyed, the wily foe advanced, and instantly assailed the blessed Redeemer by the following most artful, malicious, and insidious speech; “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread;” and by this sly temptation assaulted at once the twofold nature of the great Messiah, both his divine and human. “If thou be the Son of God,”—pretending to doubt or disbelieve the truth of Christ’s pretensions, an insinuation the most irritating he could suggest unto the God of truth; impiously and artfully demanding at the same time a proof of Christ’s divinity,* which applied in the most powerful manner to the distresses which, from hunger and exhaustion, the Lamb of God was suffering, as these would thereby have been instantly relieved;—if thou be the Son of God, prove it by an exercise of thy Almighty

* We here find the same mode of attack which was afterwards employed, during the dismal scene of the Redeemer’s crucifixion, by those who at that awful crisis acted under the controul of the infernal chieftain unto whose power that tremendous hour was wholly given up. “If thou be the Son of God, come now down from the cross, and we will believe thee.”

power, and relieve thine own distress—command that these stones be made bread. To his pretended disbelief Christ deigned not to reply; but to the insidious counsel to which, had He acceded, Christ's bodily sufferings would have been instantly relieved, our great Example answered from out that written Word which God hath given for man: Jesus answered and said, "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Our blessed Lord, who at this distressing juncture appears, like as He was at his last trying hour, to have been delivered up by his Almighty Father unto the power of darkness, was, by the foul fiend conveyed into the holy city, and by him was set on a pinnacle, or wall, of the temple; and there, still continuing to tempt the Son of God by his pretended doubts, he renewed his demand of having these resolved, by proposing another proof of the truth of his pretensions: "If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down." But the sequel of this address materially differs from the former one; he seems to assume a character which we are informed he can, as occasion needeth, transform himself into,—namely, an angel of light. Our Lord had answered him from out God's written word, and

to that he now, following our blessed Lord's example, with pretended deference, hypocritically refers, extracting from thence a reason which he hoped might induce our Lord to comply with his request; "Cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee;" though he hereby betrayed the real truth, his perfect knowledge that He with whom he now conversed was what He avowed himself—the blessed Son of God (such is the inconsistency of malign wickedness.) But Jesus, still utterly disregarding his pretended disbelief, mildly again replied from out the same inexhaustible source of wisdom which He before had done; "Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Thou shalt not madly and rashly rush into unnecessary dangers, and tempt the Lord thy God, for He will not miraculously deliver those from perils who have themselves presumptuously and wickedly plunged into them. Baffled and foiled in both these attempts, the evil spirit now no longer has recourse to subtle artifice, but throwing off the mask, he, in his own audacious character, impiously makes one final, daring, presumptuous attack, and boldly exhibits a proffer to be by him bestowed on the same conditions his other attempts had more slyly aimed to obtain, namely, disobedience to God, and obedience to him. "Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, (St. Luke adds, in a moment of time,) and saith unto him, All these things will I give

thee, and the glory of them, for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it; if thou therefore wilt fall down and worship me, all shall be thine." (Matt. iv. 8 ; Luke iv. 5—7.) A difficulty has been broached here which we conceive a moment's reflection will instantly remove: it has been asked, How could the devil in a moment of time show all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them? Why, had the second Adam, like unto the first, been merely man, it was impossible that he could have done so; but the omnipresent eye of the incarnate Deity was proved, by many instances, to pierce through the thin veil of mortal organization.* Not only the kingdoms of our world, but the kingdoms of all worlds were present to his view, and the vast faculties of the arch fiend fully empowered him to point out the great display. It is indeed said, that Christ was taken up by the devil into an exceeding high mountain; but should the foregoing observation be deemed just, the selection of this elevated spot could not have been made for the purpose of accelerating his view; a bleak and barren mountain was like as the wilderness (where Christ was driven amongst wild, ferocious beasts,) in the first instance, a situation calculated to augment the timid infirmity of his human nature, which it is observable, when left to its own selection, followed the natural dictates of a gentle, tranquil mind. A garden was the place to which Jesus ofttimes resorted with his disciples;† a

* Lazarus; Nathaniel.

† Although our sight can behold, beyond a wilderness, a beautiful perspective, we prefer a garden for our immediate view.

garden was the place which he, when following his own inclination, even chose for the endurance of his most agonizing conflict with the power of darkness. But however straitened and distressed the Redeemer was by the sufferings He sustained, the last impious proposition of hell's infernal chieftain roused his just indignation : with abhorrence he replied, " Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him ; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him." " All Scripture is given by inspiration of God ; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And to this inspiration we are solely indebted for the wonderful communications we have just been contemplating ; no mortal eye having witnessed (as was the case during Christ's transfiguration upon the mountain Tabor, and agony in the garden of Gethsemane,) this very distressing transaction. In our brief comment on it, we had occasion to notice that Christ took on him our infirmities ; and in another passage of Scripture it is said, that " He was made sin for us ;" intimating, that He also took our nature on him in a polluted state : and we are further told, that He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin ; which perhaps, could not with truth have been said, had the human nature of Christ been entirely free from every irregular bent. This is, however, certain, that whatever portion of the malignant poison

infused into man by the inveterate foe, was contained in the man Christ Jesus, that it never was allowed to evince itself by the actual commitment of sin. The flesh He had doubtless treated as He afterward did the devil—"Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence unto me."

The history mentions, soon after the termination of Christ's arduous conflict in the wilderness, that he was at this era about thirty years of age, previous to which every unlawful inclination, we may presume, had been effectually subdued: and wherewith should a young man cleanse his ways?—why, by taking heed thereto, according to God's word. And as our blessed Lord repulsed the evil one, by those unerring rules that are therein contained, there is reason to believe, that He repulsed the flesh by its most perfect precepts; leaving us in all things an example that we should follow his steps. And entire command having been once obtained, and henceforth without doubt maintained, over the natural appetite, hunger, there is no ground to suppose that he abstained from a participation of those bounties which God gives us richly to enjoy, though He thereby incurred the censure of being a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber: but wisdom is justified of all her children. And it is worthy of remark, that when our Lord directs his disciples how to fast, (an abstinence which perhaps for some persons may occasionally be as morally necessary, as it often is physically so,) He leaves the time for their so doing entirely optional, only enjoining "that they keep up all

agreeableness of appearance and cheerfulness of behaviour, and that they appear not unto men to fast.”* And probably the persons who may be most disposed to exercise this kind of self-denial are, of all others, the most unfit to do so, if stimulated to such a penance by natural gloom and erring superstition. Piety and propriety both point out the day on which we solemnly commemorate the sufferings of our dear Redeemer, as utterly improper for a day of feasting; and as every way suited for a day of abstinence.

But to return; all the evangelists concur in stating that soon after the glorious triumph Christ had obtained over hell's malignant chieftain, that He commenced his public ministry. St. Luke records, that He “returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.” (Luke iv. 14, 15.) “Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb; and he healed him. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?

* Talbot.

therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, (here speaking of the Spirit as a coadjutor,) then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men : but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. (Matt. xii. 22—31.) “ But when they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate : but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye : for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.” (Mark xiii. 11.) In Luke xii. 11, 12, the parallel thus runs : “ When they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say. For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.” But in Luke xxi. 12, our Lord, when again enforcing the parallel admonition to those we have just inserted, directs their dependance to be placed on himself : When brought before kings and rulers, for my name’s-sake, settle it in your hearts not to meditate before what to answer : for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And the parallel in Matthew x. 19, directs reliance on the paternal Deity : “ but when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak : for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” These passages concur to prove, that Fa-

ther, Son, and Holy Ghost are one in unanimity of intention, are one in operation. The Holy Ghost must therefore be a full participator of the Divine nature, for nothing short of divinity could thus act in contact with divinity, or be fully endowed with attributes and powers which belong to Deity alone. "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb." (Luke i. 15.) The holy Spirit of truth proceedeth from the Father, and acts as coadjutor with the quickening spirit incarnate in the Saviour. "And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost." (41.) "Zachariah was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied." (67.) "Simeon was just and devout, and the Holy Ghost was upon him." (ii. 25.) "And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple." (26.) Perfect consistency of relation pervades these communications; to one and the same agent, to one and the same inspirer, to one and the same source, is ascribed the illumination of man. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;" (John iii. 6;) that is, through the regenerating operation of the Holy Ghost. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink; he that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet

glorified.") John vii. 37—39. That all the servants of God have ever been illumined, quickened, (for it is the Spirit that quickeneth—John vi. 63,) and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, our present research has found the Scriptures uniform in asserting. Our Saviour, therefore, in the foregoing passage, clearly refers to those extraordinary gifts engaged to be poured down subsequent to his ascension and glorification in heaven; "and in particular on his apostles, whose inspired communications unto us he compares to the flowing forth of rivers, imparting living water."* "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." (John xiv. 16, 17.) "But the comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things;" (26;) "even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." (xv. 26.) "I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." (xvi. 7.)

Subsequent to the resurrection of our blessed Lord, on the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, "came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you; and they being yet sceptical and unbelieving, He showed unto

* Doddridge.

them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you ; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." But the miraculous and extraordinary gifts imparted through this divine Agent, were not, we know, at this time given, because that Jesus was not then glorified, nor were the wonderful gifts poured down on the apostles upon the day of Pentecost confined to that juncture. They were even endued with the power of imparting the like astonishing endowments they had themselves received, on believing converts to the new religion ; frequent mention of which is made in the Acts of the Apostles : " While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost ; for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God." (x. 44—46.) By this miraculous interposition, an infallible external evidence was given to the truth of Christianity ; the descent of the Holy Ghost was visible to the senses of the astonished beholders :* and the gifts bestowed infused in the hearts of the astonished receivers an evidence of its truth, that could neither be mistaken

* It was visible to ocular demonstration on the day of Pentecost ; and in Acts viii. 18, it is thus recorded : " When Simon saw that the Holy Ghost was given."

or effaced. Had not indeed the aid of supernatural attestation been given at this terrific era to the truth of Revelation, it would be difficult, if not utterly impossible, rationally to account for the success of its pristine preachers, or for the resignation wherewith they and their converts submitted, for its sake, to every suffering most appalling to humanity. It has been well remarked, that the Christian religion was erected upon real miracles, and has been often shook by the false pretences of unreal ones: and perhaps a better criterion cannot be pointed out for discerning betwixt these, than that directed by our sapient Lord for the detection of false prophets—"by their fruits ye shall know them." But this subject would lead us here into far too wide a field. "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." (Acts xi. 15, 16.) "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us." (xv. 8.) "He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When

they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.” (xix. 2—6.)

In addition to the accustomed blessings procured through the rite of baptism, they were gifted with the miraculous ones at this era poured down on man by the Holy Ghost: “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (which He had promised afore by his prophets in the holy Scriptures,) concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness.” (Rom. i. 1—4.) “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” (v. 5.) “Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.” (viii. 26, 27.) All these passages fully prove the Holy Ghost a person, not a property.

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.” (xv. 13.) “Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.” (ver. 16.) “Through mighty signs and wonders,

by the power of the Spirit of God." (Ver. 19.)
"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.) "It is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (Ver. 9, 10.) "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (vi. 11.) "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." (xii. 13.) "God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." (2 Cor. v. 5.) "That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (Gal. iii. 14.) "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts." (iv. 6.) "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." (v. 5.) "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (ver. 25,) "Sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. i. 13.) "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (ii. 18.) "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." (iii. 4, 5.) "There is one Spirit, one Lord, one God

and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (iv. 4—6.) "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed." (Ver. 30.) "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth; proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." (v. 9, 10.) "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (vi. 17.) "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 19.) "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost." (1 Thess. i. 5.) "Quench not the Spirit." (v. 19.) "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit." (2 Thess. ii. 13.) The same agent who was then is now, and ever will be, worlds without end. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly." &c. (iv. 1.) "That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." (2 Tim. i. 14.) "According to his mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." (Tit. iii. 5, 6.) "God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers

miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost," (Heb. ii. 4.) "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith," &c. (iii. 7.) "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance." (vi. 4, 6.) "The Holy Ghost this signifying." (ix. 8.) "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God." (14.) "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." (x. 15.) "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 1, 2.) "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace which should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." (ver. 10—12.) "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison. (iii. 18.) "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." (iv. 14.) "Hereby

know ye the Spirit of God ; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." (1 John iv. 2.) " Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given unto us of his Spirit." (ver. 13.) " For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these three are one." (v. 7.) " But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." (Jude 20.) " I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." (Rev. i. 10.) " He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (ii. 7.) " And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth ; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them." (xiv. 13.)

CHAPTER VI.

WE have now terminated this long research, the result of which has ascertained, that in addition to the Father of all comfort, and God of consolation, who, with his Almighty Son, the blessed Prince of peace, are one in operation, there does exist another Comforter, the blessed eternal Spirit, which proceedeth from both, who ever acts in full co-operation with the paternal and the filial Deity, and must therefore be equal to both in the glory of his nature; and the greatness of his attributes is so represented by the whole mass and tenor of Scripture, and is so announced by the solemn rite of baptism. It having pleased supreme wisdom to impart this wonderful communication to us, and referring to the admirable essay on the Trinity already inserted, we would inquire, whether it is not perfectly reconcilable to our very feeble reason to believe, and indeed, whether it does not appear more rational to believe than disbelieve, that from the God of love there should eternally proceed a being or beings, (for as to the knowledge of the number, we are solely indebted to Revela-

tion,) equal unto himself in benignity of nature and power of operation; who, with the Parent source of good, should ever live, and reign, and act, as one benevolent, throughout the intellectual system of the boundless universe—rather than to suppose the Deity a solitary being, or that He only conversed with intelligents greatly inferior to himself, which the very highest orders of angelic beings are uniformly represented to be. “God, we are told in Scripture, is love; but love always attaches itself to its object. It is not compatible with love to be selfish and solitary; it delights in assimilation:”* and the felicity of an infinitely perfect being can only be rendered infinitely perfect, by assimilating with infinitely perfect beings; or could any thing but perfection act in perfect co-operation with perfection? Does not the Deity appear infinitely amiable, by this assimilation of ineffable love? and must not the felicity of the Godhead be rendered infinitely perfect by such association? or can we suppose, that this communication is an unimportant one to us? No, it above all others teemeth with consolation; it is the very communication, which above all others assures us of the exceeding greatness of God’s love to us. “For in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” (1 John iv. 9.) It is the communication which clearly demonstrates the indispensable necessity of evil for the production of excessive good; for had not this irrefragable

* Knox.

necessity existed, we cannot suppose the blessed Son of God, in bliss eternally embosomed with his benignant Father, would have with him ordained the liability of degradation to intelligents, when He, by such ordination himself incurred the liability, nay, to omniscience the certainty involved in the eternal purpose of paternal Deity, that in the dread event of exemplified evil, his beloved Son would be himself compelled to endure the extremest degree of possible evil,* when overcoming evil by good; for the achievements of an infinite being must ever correspond with his infinitude. And the highest degree of possible evil could alone be endured by him, who was in possession of the highest degree of possible good: therefore, nothing short of Deity could in its infinite extent, fulfil the infinite plan.† What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things?

This is the communication which above all others leads us to search into the sacred volume, which contains the blessed words of everlasting life, and elevates our minds in contemplation on the wisest, best, and highest of all objects, the glorious Deity, whom to know is eternal life, and who, in wondrous condescension, commands himself for the grand object of our feeble imitation. Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father in

* This subject will be further considered hereafter.

† On the extent of Christ's atonement we shall futurely inquire.

heaven is perfect ; and this is the communication from which (if any) we are enabled to comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the unbounded love of Christ ; though a full comprehension can never be (at least, on earth) obtained ; for, as the apostle well observes, “ the love of Christ does far surpass all knowledge.” It is, however, a source of tender consolation within the reach of human understanding to reflect, that our blessed advocate is ever in the bosom of his benignant Father.

This is likewise the communication from whence we learn, that it is through the agency of a third glorious person concentrated in deity, that God acts upon and illuminates the dark mind of man ; and this agency is represented in Scripture as essential to our minds. The Holy Ghost, we are expressly told, is given to profit withal, how diversified soever are his blessed operations. To suppose, indeed, that God would leave the mind of man uninfluenced, that pure etherial essence, that blessed emanation from his blessed self, is alike irrational and unphilosophical : “ Men do not controvert the received systems of natural philosophy ; they believe the attraction of gravitation, cohesion, magnetism, and electricity ; but in this there is no visible agency, no sensible efflux, influx, or impulse. Yet they believe it, and certainly with reason ; but why should they think that God acts thus on matter comparatively vile, and leave mind uninfluenced, which must be said to approach in its nature to divinity, (if man can conceive any thing of divine,) and which has

an inbred tendency to assimilate with its like. The Spirit of that God who is love, still unites itself with man, for whom it has already shown so much affectionate regard in the creation and redemption.

“ The doctrine of God’s total inaction in the moral and intellectual world, is irreligious and unphilosophical ; the wisest heathens exploded it, and it is refuted in the strongest language of Scripture, which expressly teaches us, that the ministration of the Spirit, co-operating on the heart of man with the written word, is to continue its energy to the end of time. The Spirit of God is every where present, like the air which we inhale ; it is no less necessary to intellectual life, than the air to animal.

“ There is a remarkable passage apposite to the present subject, in the meditations of Antoninus, which I shall give in the translation of Collier, and as it is quoted by Delany : ‘ Let your soul,’ says the philosopher, ‘ receive the Deity as your blood does the air ; for the influences of the one are no less vital than the other. This correspondence is very practicable ; for there is an ambient, omnipresent Spirit, which lies as open and pervious to your mind as the air you breathe does to your lungs : but then you must remember to be disposed to draw it : if,’ continues Dr. Delany, ‘ this gracious gift of heaven should be denied, because it is not found to dwell with the wicked, I answer, that men may as well deny the existence of the dew, because it is not often found upon clods and filth, nor even upon grass tram-

pled with polluted feet. Let the grace of God be considered as having some analogy, some resemblance to the dew of heaven, which falls alike upon all objects below it, as the grace of God doth upon all mankind, but resteth not upon things defiled; purity abideth not with pollution. There is an elemental fire, the electrical fluid is diffused through all nature; though unseen, its energy is mighty. So also the divine Spirit actuates the intellectual word—omnipresent, irresistible, invisible.”*

And our divine teacher himself compares the operations of the Spirit to one of the most powerful, though invisible agents of nature—the wind: “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” (John iii. 8.) Now, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, united as they are by nearness of relationship, bands of closest affinity, and sameness of nature, ever acting as one good, wise, intelligent, in unanimity of purpose, and greatness of operation—may very justly be denominated one Lord, and undoubtedly are in Scripture denominated one Lord, (Deut. vi. 4,) one glorious Trinity, though they were not united in one indissoluble essence.

We shall now examine holy writ on this mysterious subject; requesting our readers’ indulgence for the so immediate repetition of passages already inserted; but which, we think, will more clearly elicit the real sense of Scripture on the

* Knox’s Christian Philosophy.

point in question, by being selected and given together. "The only begotten Son is in the bosom of the Father." "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven," (John iii. 13,) clearly implying, that although the Son of God was then incarnate on our earth, that still a communication was preserved betwixt him and his Almighty Father; and in this sense He was still in heaven.

The immensity of Deity is a subject far beyond our comprehension; but Scripture condescends to inform us, that he filleth heaven and earth with his presence: "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father," (vi. 46;) "and he that sent me is with me," (viii. 29;) "and the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever." (ver. 35.) "I proceeded forth and came from God." (ver. 42.) "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father." (x. 15.) "My Father is greater than all, and none is able to pluck my sheep out of my Father's hand; I and my Father are one."* (ver. 29, 30.) "Know

* "If we attend, not only to the obvious meaning of these words, in comparison with other passages of Scripture, but to the connexion of this celebrated text, it so plainly demonstrates the deity of our blessed Redeemer, that I think it may be left to speak for itself, without any laboured comment. How widely different that sense is, in which Christians are said to be one with God, (John xvii. 21,) will sufficiently appear, by considering how flagrantly absurd and blasphemous it would be, to draw the inference from their union with God, which Christ does from his."—*Doddridge's Expositor*, vol. ii. p. 227.

and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him." (ver. 38.) "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself." (xiii. 31, 32.) "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me."* (xiv. 6—11.)

* Dr. Doddridge's exposition is as follows: "Then Philip, one of the apostles, hearing these words, says to him, with pious ardour becoming his character, Lord, do but show us the Father, and bring us to the sight and enjoyment of him, and it is happiness enough for us, we desire no more; and resign every other hope in comparison of this. Jesus says to him, Have I been with you then so long a time, and conversed among you in so familiar a manner for successive years, and hast thou not yet known me, Philip? If thou hadst well considered who I am, thou mightest have better understood what I have now been saying; for he that hath seen me, has in effect seen the Father, as I am the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, (Heb. iv. ;) and how then dost thou say, after all that has passed between us, Show us the Father? Dost thou not then believe, though I have before af-

“ Father, they have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou

firmed it so expressly, (John x. 38 ; page 229,) that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, by so intimate an union, as to warrant such language as this ? The words which I speak to you from time to time, in which I discover and inculcate this important truth, I speak not merely of myself, but it is really the Father who dwells in me, that gives me my instructions thus to speak ; and it is He that operates together with me, and performs the miraculous works that you have so often seen, which are sufficient to demonstrate the truth of this assertion, mysterious as it is, and incredible as it might otherwise seem. Believe me, therefore, in what I have said, that I am thus in the Father, and the Father is in me ; or, if what you have so long known of my general character and veracity will not engage you to take it merely on my single testimony, at least believe me on account of those works in which you have so frequently beheld the Father acting with me ; and which indeed, afford so obvious an argument of it, that one might imagine the sight of a few of them might convince one that was before a stranger to me. And yet verily, verily, I say unto you, that you have, if possible, a yet stronger evidence than what you have already received ; for he that believes in me, that is, many of my disciples in these early ages, and each of you in particular, shall receive such an abundant communication of the Spirit, that the miraculous works which I perform he shall perform also ; yea, works in some respect greater than these shall he perform ; because, I go to my Father, who has thought fit to reserve the most amazing gifts of the Spirit, to honour my return into glory ; in consequence of which, you shall be enabled to speak with all foreign tongues ; to give the Spirit by the imposition of your hands, (that is, by an outward and visible sign, to impart an inward and spiritual grace ;) and to propagate the gospel with such amazing success, as to make more converts in one day, than I have done in the whole course of my ministry ; and, in a word, you may depend upon it, that whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, under the influence of that Spirit, and subservient to the great end of your life and ministry, I will cer-

didst send me." (xvii. 8.) "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." (Phil. ii. 6.) "Who is the image of the invisible God." (Col. i. 15.) "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." (ver. 19.) "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (ii. 2, 3.) "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (ver. 9.) "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) "And has spoken unto us by his Son," (Heb. i. 2,) "who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, (ver. 3;) "unto whom he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." (ver. 8.) "And hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." (1 John iii. 16.) "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." (v. 7.) "And behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne," (Rev. iv. 2;) "and he that sat upon the throne, said, Behold, I make all things new."

tainly do it, that so the Father may still be glorified in the Son; who, when he is ascended up to heaven, will from thence be able to hear and answer prayer; and even in his most exalted state, will continue to act with that faithful regard to his Father's honour, which He has shown in his humiliation on earth; and in this confidence I repeat it again."

(xxi. 5.) “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” (ver. 23.) “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,” (xxii. 1 :) thus describing the “throne of God, and of the Lamb,” as one and equally occupied by these two glorious luminaries, who, with the Holy Ghost, resplendent blaze as one, to light the universe. “And, behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments,” (ver. 12—14,) and worship God. Amen.

These are the passages which contain the strong intimation, if not positive assertion, that Deity concentrates in himself a plurality of persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that these three are one; in addition to which may be added that of the prophet Isaiah, (ix. 6,) namely, that in the child to be born, would dwell the mighty God, the everlasting Father: * and in chap. lx. 19, it is recorded, “the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.” In the passage just inserted from the Apocalypse, it is said, that the glory of God will lighten the heavenly Jerusalem, and that the Lamb is the light thereof; in this instance describing, as be-

* Our readers will recollect, that the incarnation of Christ, and his offices in his human nature, are distinct objects for future research.

fore observed, these glorious luminaries as one. We shall only subjoin two further observations; first, that the Tetragrammaton, or the ineffable name of God, which was written on the foundation-stone of the temple,* was by many of the rabbins† considered as parallel in its signification to the Urim and Thummim; an opinion which we apprehend to be perfectly correct; for as Urim and Thummim signify light and perfection, and, according to the Septuagint translation, manifestation and truth, words which most clearly depict the filial Deity, in whose frail representative's breastplate of judgment, these words long lay concealed with mysterious couplings; no words could more exactly correspond in their signification with the Tetragrammaton, or ineffable name of God, than those of Urim and Thummim with

* Prideaux.

† "Some will have the Urim and Thummim to be the Tetragrammaton, or the ineffable name of God, which being written, or engraven, say they, in a mysterious manner, and done in two parts and in two different ways, were the things signified by the Urim and Thummim, which Moses is said to have put into the breastplate; and that these did give the oracular power to it; and many of the rabbins go this way.—(R. Solomon, R. Moses Ben Nachman, R. Becai, R. Levi Ben Gersom, alique.) For they have all a great opinion of the miraculous power of this name. And therefore, not being able to gainsay the evidence which there is for the miracles of Jesus Christ, their usual answer is, (Toledoth Jesu ex editione Wagenselii, pp. 6, 7; Raymundi Pugio Fidei, part ii. c. 8; Buxtorfii Lexicon Rab. p. 2541,) that he stole this name out of the Temple, from the stone of foundation on which it was there written, (that is, the stone on which the ark formerly stood,) and keeping it hid always about him, by virtue of that did all his wondrous works."—*Prideaux Connection*, vol. i. p. 214.

the Father of all lights, the fountain of perfection, the glorious God of truth : and secondly, that the tiara, or mitre, on which was placed the holy name of God, is called by Josephus the triple crown of gold. This magnificent emblematic diadem was also worn by our great heavenly Priest's symbolic representative ; and, as this threefold crown was worn upon one head, it might, we conceive, be designed as descriptive of the Trinity in unity.

There is one insurmountable impediment to our ever, in this world, fully comprehending this sublime, and to us mysterious subject. We here see only through a glass darkly : in our present state, we cannot by searching find out the nature of the Almighty God, and the manner of his existence unto perfection, entirely unacquainted as we here are with the nature of spiritual existence. “ We can here know nothing of the intimate nature of spirits, the manner of their acting, or what it is that constitutes their essence ; all that we can say is, what our Saviour says to his disciples, that a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have ; spirits may possess many powers and properties of which we cannot now form any conception : there are a number of things in nature, which we cannot distinctly perceive by any of our senses, but for the existence of which we have the most positive evidence. We cannot see the air with which we are constantly surrounded, and in which we live, move, and have our beings ; and even when it rises to the most dreadful tempest, rooting up trees, overturning houses and the

most solid buildings—by which element we are every day acted upon in a lesser or greater degree, yet we can neither see nor touch this most powerful fluid: men can even collect the air, they can displace it, they can reduce its quantity, they can weigh it, but still they are insensible to its presence, but from its effects.”*

But as we are assured by the book of God, that the “invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, may be clearly seen and understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead,” (Rom. i. 20,) we shall again in all humility, endeavour from the book of nature, to illustrate by those things which we do see and do understand, that those things may be, which in this world we do not see, and cannot understand. We may easily conceive a fountain, and a sun, to concentrate in themselves three distinct principles of life and action. From a fountain possessing the most rare and inestimable properties, may proceed another fountain, equally endued with the same inestimable properties as is the parent source; (“for as the Father has life in himself, so also hath He given unto his Son to have life in himself.”) From the overflowing fulness of both these fountains, streams may proceed, gifted with the same perfections as the joint sources from whence they do proceed; and which may immediately unite together in one. We may further conceive a perpetual influx and reflux to exist between these several fountains; and that though each distinctly possesses

* Watson.

the same vital principles and powers, yet being thus conjoined, and all involved in one element, that these three are virtually one. We may also conceive, that should the secondary fountain flow forth unto a distance from its primeval source, and become enshrined in a crystalline or any other material substance, that still the communication betwixt it and its great origin, may be continually preserved by an outstretched stream from out the parent source; and the same influx and reflux be maintained as when they were in close approximation. Furthermore, the third fountain may likewise flow forth to a far distant country, and the communication with its origin also remain unbroken, though it divide and subdivide so as to reach the wants, and administer unto the necessities of its various inhabitants.

That glorious ocean of fire, the sun, may in like manner communicate and concentrate in itself three distinct vital principles; and though these may diverge to the most immense distances from their resplendent origin, yet from common ocular demonstration, we perceive that sunbeams maintain their union with their parent source.

But there is a portion of Scripture, presenting to the eye of the mind a picture far, far transcending in magnificence, beauty, and aptness of representation any delineation which the human mind could possibly suggest, (should we conjecture right as to its just interpretation,) which we conceive to be most apposite to the object now in view, namely, the illustration of things heavenly and divine, bringing them down to our ideas by

material similitude. The symbolic portraiture to which we refer, is contained in the 4th chapter of the prophecy of that highly distinguished and illuminated servant of God, the prophet Zechariah, of whom it is specially recorded, that the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, (2 Chron. xxiv. 20 ;) and that Zechariah had understanding in the visions of God. (2 Chron. xxvi. 5.)

We shall now transcribe the chapter: "And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me, answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house ; his hands shall also finish it ; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things ? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven : they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth. Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof ? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves ? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be ? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." (Zech. iv.)

Now the very high importance of this sublime representation is clearly proved by its just interpretation not having been left to the feeble comments of our unassisted intellect, for we find it accompanied by an heavenly interpreter. An angel talked with Zechariah, and inquired what he saw ? On the prophet's describing the symbolic vision, and requesting an explanation of it, he, as though somewhat surprised at his ignorance, replied, Knowest thou not what these be ? and on Zechariah answering, No, my lord, he informed him that the seven lamps conjoined on the bowl, wherewith the golden candlestick was on the top surmounted ; and the seven pipes,

united to the seven lamps which were upon the top thereof, were designed to typify the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth. We may therefore presume, that the candlestick symbolized that glorious luminary the Father of all lights; and the golden bowl that blessed font, from whence descendeth every perfect gift—apt emblems of the glorious Source of light, and glorious Source of good: as also were the lamps and pipes of those blessed eyes, which continually watch over us for good.

Furthermore, this interpretation is again confirmed, by the answer given to Zechariah's inquiry respecting the two olive trees upon the right side of the bowl, and upon the left side thereof; (showing by the bowl and candlestick being thus spoken of as closely and inseparably conjoined, that they were one and the same type;) and upon the prophet's repeating the inquiry with increased solicitude, and a more minute depiction of the glorious symbol than that in which his first inquiry was couched, What be these two olive branches, which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? the angel, after putting his former interrogatory, Knowest thou not what these be? and being answered, No, my lord; further explained, These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth; thus, a second time identifying the bowl and candlestick as representative of the Lord of the whole earth.*

* This explanation very powerfully supports the probability of the golden candlestick, (which was placed in the holy place

Now our present inquiry strongly suggests that these two anointed ones branching from out the

directly opposite to the royal table, on which was laid the representative bread of life,) being designed to typify the glorious and continual visible presence of that bright luminary, the filial Deity in this pure, holy clime; which conjecture is strongly supported both by the Scripture records and the recital of Josephus. In the first, we find a candlestick of pure gold commanded to be made; his shaft and his branches coming out of the sides of it, three on one side and three on the other; "And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof, and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it." (Ex. xxv. 37.) "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always. In the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail," (that is, where the spirits of good men after death, are said to be ever with the Lord,) "which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel," (Ex. xxvii. 20, 21;) in whose behalf that glorious luminary the filial Deity continually does plead. And Josephus describes the golden candlestick as being wrought with "bowls, lilies, pomegranates, and little cups then arising upwards from its base, it was divided into seven branches; it stretched also into seven heads, having orderly correspondence the one with the other, on which were planted seven candles." These symbols so parallel to that which was beheld by Zechariah, and which we know was typical of Almighty God, increase the probability of the supposition stated, and gives very just ground to suspect, that the candlestick affixed in the holy place, was a type of God the Son. The vision of St. John is also again synonymous: he saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, one like unto the Son of man. (Rev. i. 12, 13.) In chap. ii. ver. 1, it is said, "who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," which we are informed in the last verse of the preceding chapter, were representative of the seven churches; and that all sacred sanctuaries devoted to God's worship, are

bowl and candlestick, and consequently thereto conjoined by an indissoluble union, (for the figure of a branch, clearly depicts an indissoluble union with the stem from whence it doth proceed,) must be symbolic of the filial and consoling Deity ; for who can answer the description portrayed like these two ever-glorious persons ; and this interpretation, we think, the sacred volume does most powerfully support. The Son of God proceedeth forth, and branches out from God : the very station assigned by the magnific type now under contemplation, to the right hand branch, is that which Scripture, in various instances, proclaims as being filled by the glorious Son of God, who, we are expressly told, is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and whom Stephen beheld, standing on the right hand of God.

The filial Deity is also denominated the anointed of the Lord : “ the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.” God has anointed his beloved Son with the Holy Ghost and with power. The branch of the Lord is like-

honoured and illumined by (to the Israelites his visible, though to us invisible) presence. We are distinctly told, “ Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them,” (Ex. xxv. 8;) and on its completion, “ the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.” (xl. 34.) There he has set his name, and hearkens unto prayer : where two or three are gathered together in his name, He is in the midst of them. This presence of God in churches, renders the type of the candlesticks a very appropriate representation of those sanctuaries in which the Father of lights does condescend to dwell, and illumine the worshippers therein with the wisdom from above—He is there in the midst of them.

wise an emblem frequently employed as descriptive of the filial Deity: "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious." (Isa. iv. 2.) And in the preceding chapter to that we are now commenting on, it is said, "Behold, I will bring forth my servant the branch." These descriptions do, we conceive, very powerfully concur to prove, that the anointed olive branch which branches forth on the right hand from the resplendent symbol of the Lord of the whole earth, was designed as representative of his adored Son: and these allusions still hold further good; for an olive branch is an appropriate emblem of another of the titles of the benignant Son of God, namely, the blessed Prince of Peace. That by the olive branch on the left-hand side the bowl and candlestick, is meant the third great spiritual person of the hallowed Trinity, cannot, (if the remarks just stated respecting the right-hand symbol be allowed just,) admit of any doubt; for who can answer the description of the left-hand olive branch, depicted as it is on an equality with that on the right side, but the consoling Deity, whom we have found Scripture announcing as equal with the blessed filial One in the glory of his nature and the greatness of his attributes; who, like the Son, proceedeth forth and branches from the Father; who lives, and reigns, and acts as coadjutor with the Father and the Son; and into whose name we have been baptized conjointly with the Almighty Father and the Almighty Son.

Again; the description is in a further instance

most peculiarly apposite to God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; for the figure of a branch clearly depicts the similitude of somewhat that derives every virtue and property with which it is endued from out the source or root from whence it issueth forth, and from whence it is nourished. And this resplendent symbol clearly demonstrates whence these olive branches derive the golden olive oil, their rich, blessed, hidden treasure; for does it not exhibit them as conjoined unto, branching forth, and proceeding from the golden bowl, from whence all mercies flow? from out that golden bowl, which the celestial guide informed us did typify the Lord of the whole earth? And does not Scripture describe a perfect parallel between these glorious symbols and the triune Deity? does not that describe the filial and consoling Deity as close conjoined to, as branching forth, and proceeding from the paternal Deity? and does not that likewise inform us, that the filial and consoling Deity derive all their blessed attributes and powers from the paternal Source? But above all, the last symbolic description displayed by this high magnificent type, exhibits the most perfect parallel with the blessed characters of the benignant Saviour, and the consoling Spirit; for the olive branches do not receive the golden oil imparted by the Lord of the whole earth for vain or useless purposes; no, they empty it out of themselves, through two golden pipes, which, it is observable, are depicted as entirely unconnected with the seven pipes affixed to the seven lamps on the top of the bowl,

wherewith the candlestick was on the top surmounted, and which the heavenly Illuminator informed the prophet were representative of the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth. The two golden pipes, therefore, joined in close union with the olive branches, were unquestionably descriptive of the mode of conveyance whereby these branches, (though without separation from their parent Source,) dispense the golden oil out of themselves—pour down on all around the blessings with which they are replete. And is not this description eminently and beautifully representative of the benignant Saviour, and the blessed Comforter, the anointed blessed agents of the Lord of the whole earth? for do these two glorious beings receive the unmeasured Spirit of God, the fulness of the gifts and graces which continually flow into them from the Father, for vain or useless purposes? No, they delight to impart the same; they unceasingly are emptying forth, as through two golden pipes, the blessed golden oil from out their blessed selves. The kind emollient dew of grace descending down from them, is far more precious than the sweet olive oil of holy ointment, (Ex. xxx. 24, 25, 38;) that holy anointing oil, wherewith Aaron, when ordained to typify the anointed of the Lord, was symbolically anointed—which descended from his beard down to his lowest skirt, as the dew-drops of Hermon, on the mount which typified the heavenly Mount Zion. (Ps. cxxxiii.) For the blessed balsamic dew of grace,

distilled by the blessed Physician of souls, and his blessed coadjutor, into intelligents, can mollify the most obdurate nature, soften the hardest heart, and transform the most degenerate sinners into regenerate saints—fulfilling them with grace and heavenly benediction.

This most sublime and magnificent type appears to us eminently to illustrate how Deity can concentrate in himself three persons, forming one ever-glorious Trinity, one ever-blessed God, by exhibiting to the eye of the mind a portraiture, conveying ideas by material similitude, not only of his nature as Father of all lights and benignant source of good ; but also of the manner of his existence, the agents to whom He is conjoined, and through whom He pours his blessings down. In it we behold the great I Am, whose open eyes in all directions watch over us for good—two branches branching forth, indissolubly joined by an eternal union to the parent root, whence they derive full participation of its nature, power, and virtue ; branching upwards, branching downwards, shedding around them blessings, dividing amongst all their heavenly gifts and graces. The right hand Branch, who, in his divine nature, branches forth from God—in undissolved union vesting himself within the human nature, that branches forth from out the stem of Jesse, and which now, spiritualized and glorified, and thus conjoined to Deity, mediates with the Father ; for it is through the blessed Redeemer, all who pray have an access by one Spirit to the Father ;

and, through his unfailing mediation, our prayers are ever answered by one Spirit, ministering consolation to our oft-afflicted hearts.

This glorious triune symbol is most aptly and beautifully illustrative of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, diffused through the intellectual system of the boundless universe. That this magnific symbol was designed as illustrative of the Trinity, and of the manner of God's existence, is also confirmed by considering the occasion on which it was displayed, and the consequence it was intended to produce; for it is highly probable, that Deity would illuminate his favoured servant, the prophet Zechariah, with the knowledge of his nature and the manner of his existence. He and the prophet Haggai were the instruments whom God employed for the encouragement of Zerubbabel, Joshua the high priest, and the elders of the Jews, (Ezra v. 2; vi. 7,) in the rebuilding of the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, (which had been destroyed,) after the restoration of the Israelites from the Babylonish captivity. And as Moses had, without doubt, been enlightened with a knowledge of God's nature, and the manner of his existence, previous to the formation of the portable temple in the wilderness; and also David and Solomon, previous to the erection of the permanent one at Jerusalem—it was in perfect consonance with God's former dispensations, and must indeed have been essential to the success of the undertaking, to very fully illumine those prophets, through

whose prophesying the elders of the Jews builded and prospered. And the history informs us, that the elders of the Jews builded and prospered, through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo. (Ezra vi. 14.)

This book commences by stating the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah, by the Lord stirring up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, to proclaim throughout all his kingdom, and also to put it in writing, saying, "Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him; and let him go up to Jerusalem, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem. And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. Then stood up Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt-offerings thereon; and they also kept the feasts, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God. They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters, and meat and drink, and oil unto them of

Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia. Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua, the son of Josadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites from twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the Lord. Then stood Jeshua with his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah, together, to set forward the workmen in the house of God: the sons of Henadad, with their sons and their brethren the Levites. And the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord." (Ezra iii. 1—10.)

"Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel; then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him. But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, You have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us. Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building; and hired counsellors

against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even unto the reign of Darius king of Persia." (Ezra iv. 1—5.)

"Then ceased the work of the house of God, which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of Darius, king of Persia. Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them." (Ezra iv. 24; v. 1.)

"In the second year of Darius the king, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel, and to Joshua the high priest, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house to lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. And the word of the Lord came unto the prophet Haggai, saying, Speak now to Zerubbabel, and to Joshua the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying, Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, and all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts: according to the word that I cove-

nanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you : fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come ; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts : and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts," (Hag. i. and ii. ;) " from this day will I bless you." (ii. 19.)

Can we peruse these prophecies, without feeling assured, that the prophet Haggai had been fully illuminated with a knowledge of the divinity of the Saviour ; for as Prideaux observes, " When the desire of all nations, the Lord, whom they sought, came to this his temple, and Christ our Saviour, who was the truest Shekinah of the divine Majesty, honoured it with his presence, in this respect the glory of the latter house did far exceed the glory of the former house ; and herein the prophecies of the prophet Haggai, which foretold it should be so, had a very full and thorough completion."

Furthermore : " In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, (the same year as to Haggai,) came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, Behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest. Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities

of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me with good words, and comfortable words. So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. Therefore thus saith the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad, and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." (Zech. i. 1—17.) "I will be to her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her." (ii. 5.) "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation. And he shewed me Joshua the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee,

O Satan ; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee : is not this a brand plucked out of the fire ? And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among those that stand by. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee : for they are men wondered at : for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua ; upon one stone shall be seven eyes." (Zech. ii. 10—13 ; iii. 1, 2, 6—9.)

That this one stone with seven eyes was typical of God the Son, is plainly proved by the following relations. It is described on an equality in attributes and powers with the fountain bowl ; for on this was conjoined the same number of lamps, or eyes, namely seven. God's servant the branch, and the stone laid before Joshua, alike typified the Messiah ; for Messiah is uniformly denominated the foundation stone of the temple of the Lord : " Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." (Isa. xxviii. 16.) " Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." (Eph. ii. 20, 21.)

The fourth chapter of Zechariah's prophecy has been already inserted, with the omission of the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th verses, which

entirely correspond with the relation of Ezra, namely, that the elders of the Jews builded and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah. And the subject-matter of these verses, which we now proceed to transcribe, are distinctly delivered for the encouragement of Zerubbabel and those who had with him undertaken the rebuilding of the temple of the Lord; as also was this glorious typical revelation we have just contemplated, with which this encouraging prophecy was accompanied, and indeed involved. “Then the angel that talked with me, answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” “As the olive branches are supplied with oil in a secret invisible manner, (as we have just seen depicted,) so the temple shall be finished and the nation established, not by human power and force, but by the powerful operations of God’s Spirit upon the hearts of the kings of Persia and of the Jewish people.”* “Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain:” all and the greatest obstacles, though they be huge as mountains, shall be removed from out of his way, and levelled to a plain :) “and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof:” (and that Messiah was the head-stone, he himself identified,—“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone

* Orton.

which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner : this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.") And he shall bring forth the typical head-stone thereof " with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it !"

It is recorded, Ezra iii. 8, 9, 10, that in the second year of the return of the children of Israel from the Babylonish captivity, " they," Zerubbabel and Joshua, and the remnant of their brethren, the priests and the Levites, " began to set forward the work of the house of the Lord." " And when the builders laid the foundation-stone of the temple of the Lord (on which, as Josephus informs us, was written Tetragammaton, or the ineffable name of God,) they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David king of Israel. And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord ; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house was laid." Thus fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah unto Zerubbabel, namely, that he should bring forth the typical head-stone with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it ! But when Almighty God brought forth the blessed true head-stone, then the celestial hierarchies enraptured pealed his praise. The glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds of Judea, instructing the angel that talked with them, to speak good words and comfortable words unto them, (as before had the angel

that talked with Zechariah.) “The angel said unto the shepherds, Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God (because He is good, and his mercy endureth for ever), and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace; good-will towards men.” Thus was the true head-stone brought forth with shouts of heavenly benediction, crying, “Grace, grace, unto it!” “Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel,”— (“Whosoever hath despised the small beginnings, shall rejoice when they see Zerubbabel vigorously setting about the work, and carrying it on successfully,”*) “with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro, through the whole earth;” exactly corresponding with the relation given to Ezra, (v. 2, 5,) namely, that “Zerubbabel and Joshua began to build the house of God at Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God helping them. At the same time came Tatnai, governor, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and endeavoured to interrupt the work. But the eye of their God was

* Orton.

upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease." Thus fulfilling the prophecy upon which we are now commenting ; " who hath despised the day of small things ? for they shall rejoice and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, with those seven ; they are the eyes of Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth," and who is now in the most special and irresistible manner superintending and prospering the work : overruling the machinations of all who oppose the completion of the building of the house of the Lord ; which we read (Ezra vi.) was finished in the sixth year of the reign of Darius, (ver. 15,) through a decree made by that potent monarch. (ver. 12.)

This survey has, we think, justified the premised observation, by eliciting that the occasion on which these glorious types, the candlestick, bowl, lamps, and olive-branches were displayed, was precisely that which renders it most highly probable, if not certain, that they were designed to represent the blessed Trinity.

We know that the usual interpretation of these magnific types suppose the two olive-branches, branching forth from the golden candlestick, to be representative of Zerubbabel and Joshua ; but as, on heavenly authority, we are informed that the candlestick symbolised the Lord of the whole earth, we cannot but think that such an interpretation is wholly dissonant with the real meaning. The branches conjoined to the candlestick might have been, with perhaps equal probability, supposed to typify the prophets Haggai

and Zechariah; and though Zerubbabel the governor of Judea, and Joshua the high priest, were certainly the two leading men in rebuilding the temple, yet the history, in several instances, mentions, and even commences by speaking of them on terms of equality with the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin. (Ezra i. 5.) In the third chap. ver. 1, it is said that "the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem," and that "then stood up Jeshua and Zerubbabel;" and ver. 8 runs as follows: "In the second month began Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and the remnant of their brethren the priests, (who were all anointed persons,) and the Levites, to set forward the work of the house of the Lord." In the 4th chapter, when the adversaries of Judah opposed the work, they addressed themselves unto Zerubbabel and the chief of the fathers. These recitals show, that though Zerubbabel and Jeshua were the leading men, yet that they only set forward the important work of re-erecting the temple at Jerusalem, in conjunction with the other chiefs of Judah and Benjamin; and that, therefore, there is little or no reason to suppose that the typical olive-branches, branching from the Lord of the whole earth, could be intended as representative of them.

But there is also a further consideration which materially weakens, if it does not altogether do away, the justness of the supposition on which we have been descanting. For in the Apocalypse we find the evangelist St. John describing a vision almost exactly similar to that beheld by the

prophet Zechariah. “ And there was given me a reed, like unto a rod : and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple (that is, the probationary heavens) leave out, and measure it not ; for it is given unto the Gentiles : and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive-trees and the two candlesticks (the two glorious luminaries) standing before (and, as Zechariah viewed them, conjoined unto) the God of the whole earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies : and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy : and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that

dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." (Rev. xi. 1—12.)

The importance of this vision is alike evidenced by its being accompanied by an angelic interpreter, as was that exhibited to the prophet Zechariah, and with which it forms almost a precise parallel. In the vision of Zechariah the two olive-trees are said to be the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth; in the vision of St. John the two olive-trees are said to be the two witnesses standing before the God of the whole earth. In the vision of Zechariah the olive-trees are described as branching from the golden candlestick, which signified the Lord of the whole earth; in the vision of St. John the olive-trees themselves are called candlesticks, standing before the God of the whole earth. And should the comment we have presumed to offer be esteemed just, the symbol of candlesticks is as aptly appropriate to those bright luminaries who are conjoined in eternal union with the Father of all lights, and who ever live and reign with him, one God, blessed for evermore, as to the parent source from whence all lights proceed. And that these visions are considered one and the same

vision, must be well known to all who have examined our most able commentators on this subject; and cannot, we think, admit of any doubt. Some portions of Bishop Newton's Dissertations on the 11th chapter of the Apocalypse will be here transcribed.

“By treading under foot the holy city,” he conceives “is meant an era when the church of Christ should in the most indignant manner be trampled upon, and tyrannized over. ‘And I will give power to my two witnesses;’—at the same time God should raise up some true and faithful witnesses (ver. 3) to preach and protest against those innovations and corruptions of religion. Of these witnesses there should be, though but a small, yet a competent, number; and it was a sufficient reason for making them two witnesses, because that is the number required by the law and approved by the gospel:—‘In the mouth of two witnesses shall every word be established.’ (Deut. xix. 15. Matt. xviii. 16.) And upon former occasions two have often been joined in commission, as Moses and Aaron in Egypt, Elijah and Elisha in the apostacy of the ten tribes, and Zerubbabel and Jeshua after the Babylonish captivity; to whom these witnesses are particularly compared. Our Saviour himself sent forth his disciples two and two, (Luke x. 1,) and it hath been observed also that the principal Reformers have usually appeared as it were in pairs—as the Waldenses and Albigenses, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, Luther and Calvin, Cranmer and Ridley, and their followers. Not that I conceive that

any two particular men, or two particular churches, were intended by this prophecy, but only it was meant, in the general, that there should be some in every age, though but a few in number, who should bear witness to the truth, and declare against the iniquity of their times.

“ A character is then given of these witnesses, and of the power and effect of their preaching. These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth (ver. 4), that is, they are like Zerubbabel and Jeshua, (Zech. iv.) the great instructors and enlighteners of the church.”*

Now, in this comment two points are discoverable; first, that Bishop Newton considers the vision of Zechariah and the vision of St. John to be one and the same vision; and, secondly, that he interprets the olive-trees beheld by the prophet to be symbolic of Zerubbabel the governor of Judea, and Joshua the high priest. And we shall now (though in all humility) presume to offer some remarks on the foregoing comment.

That by treading under foot the holy city was meant an era when the church of Christ should in the most indignant manner be trampled upon and tyrannized over, appears to us a most just interpretation.—“ And I will give power to my two witnesses; at the same time God should raise up some true and faithful witnesses (ver. 3) to preach and protest against those innovations and corruptions of religion. Of these witnesses there should be, though but a small, yet a competent,

* Newton on the Prophecies, vol. iii. p. 133—135.

number." Assigning the reasons already inserted as to the propriety of the number being two, he then proceeds to specify instances of two having often been joined in commission, as Moses and Aaron in Egypt, &c. &c., and Zerubbabel and Jeshua after the Babylonish captivity; to whom he adds that the two witnesses spoken of in the Revelations are particularly compared. And again, when speaking of the character of these two witnesses, and recording that these were the two olive-trees standing before the God of the earth, he further says, that is, they are like Zerubbabel and Jeshua, the great instructors of the church; thus proving the truth of the premised assertion, namely, that Bishop Newton considered the vision of Zechariah and the vision of St. John to be one and the same vision. For on what other grounds could he assert the two witnesses, whom the angel informed St. John were the two olive-trees standing before the God of the earth, to have been particularly compared to Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and intended to represent men like unto them? Now, by the argument deducible from this comment, these glorious types, the olive-trees and candlesticks spoken of in the Revelations, may with equal justness be considered as depictive of John Huss, Jerome of Prague, Luther and Calvin, Cranmer and Ridley, or any other two persons zealously united together in the defence of religion, as of Zerubbabel and Jeshua; a consideration which we conceive strongly tends to prove this interpretation an erroneous one. Neither can we agree with Dr. Newton in thinking

that by the two olive-trees was meant an indefinite number;—"that is, in the general, that there should be some in every age, though but a few in number, who should bear witness to the truth." The vision in which these were displayed was twice repeated, and in each instance explained by a celestial expositor, who differed only in the appellation; denominating those beheld by the prophet, the two anointed ones which stand by the Lord of the whole earth—those beheld by the evangelist, the two witnesses standing before the God of the earth; but precisely and distinctly agreeing as to the number being two. Besides, had the olive-trees exhibited to Zechariah been intended to typify Zerubbabel and Jeshua, it is reasonable to suppose that the angel would not have left the prophet, destined to encourage his brethren in the weighty work in which they were engaged, uninformed on a point, elevating him and his coadjutor to such transcendent honour. But totally opposite was the interpretation, in both cases, given by the heavenly interpreters. These convey not the most remote idea of those illustrious types, the olive-trees, depicting any human creature. These, on the contrary, describe them as representative of beings of the highest and most glorious nature—as beings conjoined unto, and stationed in contact with, the glorious Source of light, and glorious Source of good; a description wholly inapplicable to Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and which we think none can answer to but God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. Nor do the angelic commen-

tators, as do human ones, annex any further explanation. These say not a word of "Zerubbabel and Joshua continually attending upon God, to receive direction and assistance from him in their work."* "These utter not a word of the power and effect of their preaching."† They merely assert that the two olive-trees were the two anointed witnesses standing before the Lord of the whole earth. And it may be premised, from the special record given of the prophet Zechariah, namely, that he had understanding in the visions of God, and from an attentive perusal of his prophecy, that any further explanation would to him have been useless and superfluous; and that he well understood who was meant by the two anointed ones standing before the God of the earth. And the same observation still more forcibly attaches to the beloved apostle, and an attentive perusal of his Gospel and Epistles. He well knew that there were three who bear record in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

We shall now examine into Dr. Worthington's opinions as to the symbolic meaning of the two olive-trees which in the Apocalypse are announced as standing before the Lord of the whole earth. "It would," says this excellent writer, "be tedious and unprofitable to recount the various conjectures, which have been made by different interpreters, about the two witnesses. I will, notwithstanding, beg leave to add one conjecture more to the number. These witnesses are repeatedly said to be two, neither more nor less.

* Orton.

† Bishop Newton.

Regard therefore must be had to the number. They have authority given them to prophesy, that is, to bear witness to the truth, against errors and corruptions—in sackcloth—in a distressed and afflicted condition, for 1260 days; which contains the same space of time with the profanation of the Gentiles, which they are to prophesy, or bear witness against. And they are to be co-existent, and to keep pace with those Gentiles, during the whole extent of their continuance from first to last. These witnesses, therefore, cannot be meant of any two individuals, but must be understood of a succession of persons, and must form certain bodies of men, to continue in succession, as long as the Gentiles themselves, against whom they are to prophesy, shall so continue. In the next verse they are set forth by the emblems of two olive-trees and two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the whole earth. By olive-trees, in this prophetic language, are signified churches. The green olive-tree in the prophet Jeremiah (xi. 16) manifestly signifies the Jewish church. By candlesticks are signified churches likewise. The golden candlestick in Zechariah, with the two olive-trees by it, plainly signifies the same Jewish church; and the seven candlesticks in the book of Revelations are expressly said to be seven churches. The two witnesses, therefore, in the place before us, as described by both the emblems of two olive-trees and two candlesticks, must be two churches, or two distinct branches of one and the same universal church of Christ. The olive-trees signifying

that by them the lamp of Christ's church is supplied with the oil of good works and sound doctrine; and the candlesticks that the light of God's word is preserved in them. But what churches these are, is the question. To bear testimony, and remonstrate against the superstitious usages, false doctrines, and idolatrous worship with which these western churches have been infected, there have always been, from the first rise of these corruptions, throughout all ages, a constant succession of true believers, who witnessed a good confession, and were faithful unto death, &c. &c. This interpretation of the witnesses is not to be rejected, nor yet to be admitted but with this restriction,—that whereas it supposes both the witnesses to be included in this collective and successive body of men, I apprehend that only one of them is constituted by it; as it doth not seem capable of being divided into two separate and distinct classes; nor indeed hath any such division ever been attempted. Where then, it will be asked, will you find the other witness? The other witness, I conceive, is constituted by the distressed churches of the east, which groan under the tyranny of Mahometanism. The Christians of the eastern church having filled up the measure of their iniquities, God thought fit to suffer the followers of Mahomet to overrun and conquer all those countries in which Christianity had been first planted, and had greatly flourished for many centuries. By the same sword with which these infidels made their conquests, they propagated their religion. They soon got pos-

session of Jerusalem, and the holy city hath been literally trodden under foot by these Gentiles now for many ages. The light of the gospel was every where suppressed, and darkened by the imposture of Mahometanism. The churches were turned into mosques, and Christianity is reduced to the lowest state in all those countries in which it once universally prevailed. But though it is distressed, it is not extirpated: God hath preserved himself a seed; a remnant is left which is more or less dispersed through all parts of the Turkish dominions, to bear witness against the false prophet in behalf of the truth of Christianity. And these poor Christians too truly answer the description of being clothed in sackcloth; being most cruelly harassed and oppressed by their tyrannical masters.”*

Though this comment is, we think, far preferable to that of Dr. Newton, yet we do not think the observations it contains sufficiently powerful to overturn that we have presumed to offer; and we shall now, though in all humility, beg leave to state some remarks on it. The strongest reason which Dr. Worthington gives in support of his assertion, that by the two witnesses, as described by both the emblems of two olive-trees and two candlesticks, must be meant two churches, or two distinct branches of one and the same universal church of Christ, is the explanation given at the conclusion of the 18th, 19th, and 20th verses of the 1st chapter of Revelations,—“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold,

* Worthington's Sermons, preached at Boyle's Lectures, vol. ii. page 239.

I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." But is not a candlestick, which unquestionably typifies light and illumination, and which, in the vision beheld by Zechariah, we know, on heavenly authority, symbolized the Lord of the whole earth, as appropriate a type of Deity, of the great Source and Father of all lights, as it is of a church? Or could candlesticks be an appropriate type of churches, but for the illuminating deity, announced in Scripture as dwelling continually within these hallowed fanes? In the consecrated sanctuary ordained by the Mosaic institution, God did himself declare that He would affix his name, and continually dwell. (Exod. xxix. 45.) In this He revealed the glory of his immediate presence, and with his glory filled the whole house. (2 Chron. v. 14.) Under the Christian one, though the visible presence of Deity has been totally withdrawn from out our hallowed sanctuaries, yet we are assured that God would fill this latter house with glory; and that the glory of the latter house should be greater than the former. For where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, He has himself declared He is in the midst of them. When St. John beheld the seven golden candle-

sticks, which typified the seven churches, he likewise beheld Christ in the midst of them, and their angels in his hand; showing that they were completely under his controul and solely at his command. And a spiritual union betwixt Christ and his church is continually described in Scripture by figures representing them as one.—“I am the vine, ye are the branches.” We are “grafted into the good olive-tree.” (Rom. xi. 24.) “Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone of the church, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Ephes. ii. 20, 21, 22.) “Christ is the head of the church,” (v. 23,) “and we are members of his body.” (ver. 30.) Again: “and he is the head of the body, the church,” (Col. i. 18;)—“who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body’s sake, which is the church,” (ver. 24.) Again: “But Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house we are.” (Heb. iii. 6.)

These passages do, we conceive, render the symbol of a candlestick as appropriate a representation of sanctuaries inhabited and illuminated by Deity, as it is of Deity itself; rendering it highly probable that the candlesticks spoken of in the book of Revelations, in which Christ was in the middle depicted God the Son, concentrated unto his body the church; that is, the living members whereof it is composed, and between whom and their adored Head we have found

Scripture describing so close and intimate an union. Or could candlesticks, which manifestly signify light and illumination, be any way an apt type of churches, but for the illuminating influence of the indwelling Trinity? We therefore think it very reasonable to conclude that candlesticks (the seven spoken of in the Apocalypse) may be at once intended as symbolic of Christ and his members, the church, which is his body, and of which he is the living Head. But supposing that this was not the fact, we cannot discover any just reason for concluding that because the seven golden candlesticks which St. John beheld were explained to him as typifying seven eastern churches, that it must incontrovertibly follow, which Dr. W.'s comment seems to intimate, that the candlestick beheld by the prophet Zechariah was designed to typify a church also. In both instances these visions were explained by heavenly interpreters; and it might be reasonably expected that if the golden candlestick exhibited to Zechariah was designed as representative of the ancient Jewish church, (except we consider God and the church as one,) that the angel who so very particularly answered the anxious inquiries of the prophet as to its real meaning, would not have omitted informing him that it was so intended. On the main point the celestial guide is explicit and decisive, namely, that it typified the Lord of the whole earth; and the description he enters into is distinct and minute. The eyes of the Lord are conjoined by golden pipes unto the bowl and candlestick; and the two anointed olive-

trees, which branch on each side from it, are expressly said to be the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. And it does, we think, lamentably degrade the meaning of these glorious types to imagine them representative either of any two individual men, collective bodies of men, or eastern and western churches, except it be on the account of God's union with collective bodies of men, as members of the universal church. Besides, supposing Dr. W.'s conjecture to be just, as to the two witnesses representing the afflicted members of the eastern and western churches groaning under the oppressive tyranny of Mahometan, and, lamentable to state, Christian persecution, from opposing sectaries, (and certainly is, in a figurative sense, a just conjecture, if we consider the two witnesses as representative not only of Christ, but also of the collective members of Christ's body, the church,) yet admitting this to be a true representation of the vision beheld by St. John, how are the two anointed olive-trees, displayed to the prophet, to be interpreted and disposed of? (and that the Old and New Testament visions were one and the same vision, Dr. W., by implication, clearly allows.) For it is highly improbable that the two anointed olive-trees beheld by Zechariah could be designed to typify the eastern and western churches, under the Christian dispensation. The only view in which they can be considered as depictive of holy sanctuaries is that we have already stated, namely, the union of the Trinity with holy sanctuaries. The Mosaic insti-

tution was only prefigurative of the Christian one; and whilst the temporary tabernacle was ambulatory in the wilderness, we know from whence those who therein did worship derived their spiritual sustenance—how the blest olive-oil was administered to them,—“For they did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ,”—“who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” Therefore, in this point of view, the types in question may be considered as representative not only of the glorious Trinity, but also of its union with holy sanctuaries. The two visions are unquestionably one and the same vision; and, as Joseph observed respecting Pharaoh’s two dreams, if the dreams were one, the interpretation was one; so, in like manner, if the visions are one, the interpretation is one also.

It therefore only now remains to inquire, how far the characters of the two witnesses described in the Apocalypse are correspondent with the two anointed ones; that is, with God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. It is first observable, that the occasion on which the vision was imparted to St. John, was very similar to that on which it was imparted to Zechariah: that under the Old Testament was to encourage the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, and the re-establishment of the Jewish religion; that under the New, was to support the Christian church under its destruction, and the subsequent afflictions that awaited them, namely, the holy city

being given to the Gentiles, to be trampled under foot forty and two months—for the space of forty and two prophetic months, or twelve hundred and sixty days. But that at the conclusion of that period, true religion would again revive and be established. “And I will give power unto my two witnesses:” these are spoken of in terms of as complete equality as are God the Son and God the Holy Ghost; and therefore, in this instance answer the description of these blessed, glorious persons; and the appellation of witnesses is also precisely that affixed unto these highly exalted beings. Jesus Christ is styled the “faithful witness,” (Rev. i. 5;) his works bear witness of him. (John x. 25.) He likewise himself remarks, It being written in the Jewish law, (viii. 17,) that the testimony of two men is true, that He is one who bears witness of himself, and that the Father who sent him beareth witness of him, rendering the title of witness even applicable to paternal Deity. The very end for which Christ was born, and the very cause for which He came into the world was, that he should bear witness to the truth. (John xviii. 37.) The Spirit of truth, which is the Holy Ghost, he testifies of Christ. (John xv. 26.) “It is the Spirit that beareth witness of him, because the Spirit is truth.” (1 John v. 6.) And he “witnesseth in every city.” (Acts xx. 23.) It is He also who beareth witness to our spirits that we are the children of God. “And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost.” (v. 32.) And when a celestial voice was heard from heaven, proclaiming,

“Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord,” the Holy Ghost bare witness to the consoling truth; “yea, saith the Spirit, they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”

We therefore conceive, that the title of God’s two witnesses is strictly applicable to God the Son and God the Holy Ghost: “And I will give power unto my two witnesses”—this again completely corresponds with the scriptural relation of these hallowed dignities. All power is given to the Son of God, both in heaven and in earth; all power is also given to the Holy Ghost: He is the gracious Giver of all spiritual gifts and graces, and has power to dispose of these to every man severally as He will: “And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.” That both filial and consoling Deity are authors of all prophecy is scarce needful to remark: “And they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.”

The chapter on which we are now commenting, commences by stating that the holy city should be trodden under foot of the Gentiles forty and two months. Pity is an attribute of deity itself; can we therefore suppose, that during this afflictive era, He who died to save the world, and who never willingly afflicts his people, is an unmoved spectator? that He, who in tears pronounced the prophecy contained in the chapter under comment, remains unmoved during the period of its accomplishment? “When Jesus beheld the city, he wept over it, saying, If thou

hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes ; for the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee ; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another : and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Or can we suppose that He, (that is, the Holy Ghost,) who intercedes for saints with unutterable groanings, is unconcerned at these sad, dire events? These therefore may, we think, with strict propriety, be figuratively said to prophesy, or in other words, to behold the fulfilment of these particular prophecies to which this relation alludes, clothed in sackcloth during the sad, distressing period of their accomplishment. Although these are the two olive-trees and candlesticks, the two benign bright luminaries, standing before the God of the whole earth, notwithstanding their transcendent elevation, they are pitiful and merciful, and with deep concern behold the sorrows, which, in their boundless wisdom, they have seen fit should take place upon our globe. But if any man will hurt them, (that is, the cause which they espouse,) fire proceedeth out of their mouths, and devoureth their enemies ; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

Dr. W.’s comment is as follows : “ We learn from the word of God, and the history of the

church in all ages, that God will avenge the blood of his servants, the prophets and preachers of his word, on those who persecute them; its being here said to be done by fire, proceeding out of the mouth of the witnesses, is agreeable to the style of prophecy," (and certainly could not be said of any human being or of churches.) "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them." (Jer. xxiii. 29. v. 14.) "This prophecy of Jeremiah was not literally fulfilled upon the people of Judah by fire, notwithstanding that all these judgments with which God threatened them by his prophet for their rebellion and idolatry overtook them in the end, in another but no less effectual manner. And as they were not to be destroyed by fire, so neither is it necessary that the persecution of God's servants, the witnesses, should be punished in that particular manner, to fulfil the prediction before us. It is sufficient to that end, if they are punished in any, especially in any remarkable manner; and we have many examples of remarkable judgments inflicted on the persecutors and oppressors of God's people, recorded in Scripture and church history, which are too numerous to be here recorded. Notwithstanding, as the officers of Ahaziah, and their men, who were sent to apprehend Elijah, were consumed by fire in like manner, whereby the prediction will have a more exact and literal accomplishment; and there are grounds to believe that their punishment, their temporal punishment, will be

closed in that manner, when they shall have filled the measure of their iniquity, and that judgment which is prepared for them comes to be put in execution; but whether they shall be destroyed by fire or otherwise, the denunciation is repeated, to denote that vengeance will not fail to overtake them, in one manner or other, sooner or later; most probably in this world, but most certainly in the next."

A literal interpretation is always preferable to a figurative one; and if we are right in concluding the two witnesses (as we have already done the two olive branches revealed to Zechariah,) to be representative of the filial and consoling Deity, in the comment we shall now in all humility presume in continuation to offer, there will be far less reason to have recourse to figurative interpretation, than in that just stated; and if we consider the witnesses as representing the Head of the church in conjunction with its members, it will nearly do away the necessity of any figurative interpretation. If any man will hurt the two olive trees, the two candlesticks, the two anointed luminaries, standing before the God of the whole earth—if any man will hurt the faithful members of Christ's holy church, he hurts, as it were, the apple of his eye. If any man hurts his weakest members, even one little one, who puts his trust in Christ, better, far better would it be for him to have a millstone slung round his obdurate neck, and be cast into the sea. If any man hurt and oppress the glorious cause of Christianity, the glorious religion which they the witnesses have in-

troduced on earth, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies.

And unto whom can the power spoken of in the prophecy before us with so much truth be literally applied, as it can unto the faithful and true witness Jesus Christ our Lord? for it is highly improbable, now that the fulfilment of prophecy has superseded the necessity of miraculous interposition, that God, who generally works by secondary causes, should again endue Christ's members with the power of working miracles. It is highly improbable, under the Christian dispensation, that they should be endued with a power like unto Elijah, (which Dr. W.'s comment seems to intimate is not highly improbable;) for was not the very apostle, unto whom the revelation in question was imparted, himself reproved for requesting such a power? The disciples James and John said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." (Luke ix. 54, 55.) Besides, we live under the very period in which the prophecy in question is receiving its fulfilment.

The holy city still continues to be trampled down by Mahometans and infidels; and the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet is not as yet removed from out the holy place. Yet there is no miraculous interposition, no fire from heaven descends, though the faithful and true witness is doubtless, without such means, so ordering all events as to complete its full ac-

complishment. But though miraculous interposition is not now employed, Scripture abounds with prophecies, denouncing that at the final consummation of all things, the Lord Jesus Christ will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, to pour destruction upon them who do not obey his gospel, consuming them with the spirit of his mouth, and destroying them with the brightness of his coming. And we also know, that blasphemy against him who witnesseth of Christ, that is, the Holy Ghost, can never be forgiven, neither in this world or the world to come: therefore, if any man will hurt these blessed witnesses, he must in this manner be killed, and be consigned to eternal death. This recital then again applies to God the Son and God the Holy Ghost; and the description given in the ensuing verse still more powerfully and exclusively answers to these two glorious beings: these, that is, the witnesses, have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters, to turn them to blood; and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And who can possess such power except the Trinity, unless God should be pleased to endue his servants upon earth with power from on high again to work by miracle? which, from the reasons we have so very briefly stated, we conceive wholly improbable. Besides, supposing Christ's faithful members were even to be again endued with the power from on high of working miracles during their stay on earth, from whom could they derive their power excepting Deity? And is it not much

more in consonance with right reason to conclude that the blessed Head and Author of the Christian church would now himself, long as his church endured, exercise all power, rather than ever act again through the medium of his members, or any other subordinate medium; rather than ever again endue them with a power, which at the first preaching of the gospel was essential to its welfare; but which, as Dr. Douglas observes, there is all the reason in the world to believe was totally withdrawn about the beginning of the second century?*

But to return: These, that is, the witnesses, "have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy." The filial and consoling Deity have uncontrolled power over all elements, and can inflict the most especial judgments in the days of their prophecy. That these have ever power to inflict severest judgments; that these have ever prophesied from all eternity, are unquestionable truths. All these passages must therefore apply to the period during which the fulfilment of the particular prophecy to which the chapter now under comment very clearly refers, is receiving its fulfilment, namely, the treading down of the holy city by the Gentiles; and which was done by the Roman soldiers, under the command of Titus, without miraculous interference; though doubtless so directed by the sovereign Ruler and Disposer of every event. And as the destruction of the Jewish temple took place during the lifetime of the evangelist St. John, unto whom the

* Douglas's Criterion, p. 405.

treading down of the holy city and its continued degradation for a given time, was a second time prophesied—the power possessed by God’s anointed witnesses was most minutely particularised and enforced upon this beloved apostle’s mind, evidently to support him in his old age, under the afflictive dispensation; and also all pious Christians in successive ages, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled—till this prophecy receives its final consummation. Though the cause of Christianity should be reduced to a low and distressing ebb, by such continued persecution, (and the Spirit expressly tells us that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, and perilous times will come,) yet none need to fear its ultimate revival; for it is under the guardianship of blessed Omnipotence.

The anointed witnesses are endued with universal power over all nature. They can turn waters into blood; can so distemper this essential fluid, as to unfit it for man’s use. “And they can smite the earth with all plagues,” (not only during the time of this particular prophecy,) but at all times, as often as they will. They hold ten thousand thunders in their almighty hands, and can, without employing supernatural means, (though that they can do as often as they will,) so govern all events, as to fulfil their prophecies by the common laws of nature. The electric flash, earthquakes, pestilence, war, famine, are, unperceived by us, all working out their will. And if Christ prays his Father, legions of angels are instant at his command. And when they shall have finished their testimony—when they

shall, through their omnipotence, have fulfilled all the particular prophecies to which this chapter alludes, and Christ's faithful members have been trampled upon, desecrated, and most ignominiously treated by infidels and idolators, for the space of twelve hundred and sixty years; and true religion reduced to a very low and lifeless state, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against these two glorious witnesses; the infidel cause shall so prevail against the Christian one, that they will overcome and kill Christ's faithful members. Of the enfeebled and depressed state of that once glorious church which Christ calls his own body, the power of darkness will take malign advantage, and will so war against, persecute, and subdue its faithful members, as for a time to suspend their worship and annihilate their religion. The furious wolf will scatter, catch, and kill the feeble, harassed flock; "and their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half"—for a given period, according to prophetic calculation, three years and an half—"and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves." The once rejoicing members of Christ's blessed church will lie as dead (a figurative expression often used in Scripture,—those that live in pleasure are dead while they live) will lie in an useless, torpid state in sight of insulting enemies,—kindreds, tongues, and nations,—who will

not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves, incapacitated as they now are to offer any opposition to the overwhelming torrent of general depravity. They will even so persecute and trample on the afflicted members of the Saviour's body, in this their oppressed, low condition, as to deny them participation of the decent charities of life.

Or, indeed, it is highly probable, this prophecy may have already received a literal accomplishment. "For," as Dr. Worthington remarks, "it is notorious that even contending sects of Christians (lamentable to relate) carried their animosities to such a height, that in instances too tedious to enumerate, they would not permit their opposers in particular opinions this small piece of humanity to be shown to their bodies, and even denied them the decency of a Christian burial." And as such insulting circumstances have happened, they may again occur, when this prophecy receives its final termination, and the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

"And they that dwell on the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." The degenerate inhabitants of this world will triumph over and rejoice at what appears to them the total dissolution of a church which they utterly abhorred; and Scripture itself informs us that the earliest sect of Christians was spoken against everywhere. And when we look at what is past, and is now passing on our little globe, we cannot doubt the

fulfilment of this prophecy at the predicted period. As our own times exhibit continual instances of those who delight to vilify and blaspheme both Christ and his religion, and who would make merry and congratulate one another at its total extirpation; because the rules whereby its two blessed authors require mankind to govern their thoughts, lives, and actions, are annoying unto them; and the judgments they denounce against impenitent sinners are tormenting to a depraved generation.

“ And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet.” But at the completion of that eventful period, when these afflictive prophecies shall have been completely fulfilled, God will himself irresistibly interpose, evince the impotence of the infernal power, and gloriously revivify the cause of Christianity. The Spirit of life from God, fraught with power omnipotent, will enter into the dispirited members of Christ’s now demolished churches; and so reanimate them with his blessed influence, that they shall stand firm on their feet. The church shall be re-erected upon a solid rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt. xvi. 18.) And to this agree the words of all the prophets: “ As it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and will set it up. That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

Known unto the Lord are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts xv.)

"And great fear fell upon them that saw them." On this wonderful and unexpected revolution and revivification, through the operation of the Spirit of life, of a religion which they hated, and considered as annihilated and dead—on this irresistible evidence of its truth, the greatest consternation and terror prevailed, lest the judgments it predicted should fall on its opposers and crush its enemies. As the recital contained in the four last verses could not possibly apply to Christ but as conjoined to those members of whom He himself declares, that whosoever ministers to them, ministers to him; and, from parity of reasoning, whosoever injures them, injures Christ himself;—the comment we have offered, so far as it considers the witnesses to represent Christ's members conjoined to their Head, may certainly in some degree be deemed a figurative interpretation; but we do not think this part of the prophecy before us can be otherwise explained. For it is impossible that the power of darkness could ever again, through the agency of man, kill the Lord of life and glory, who liveth for evermore. And as the ensuing verse recounts that those who had been killed and revivified, "heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither, and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them," we must still continue on this part of the relation to offer a figurative interpretation. For except we suppose God again to work by miracle, and literally cause the dead

bodies of the members of Christ's church to arise from death, and visibly ascend into heaven, previous to the general resurrection,—a supposition which, from the reasons stated, is wholly improbable,—it must be in a figurative or spiritual sense that Christ's members are here said to have ascended into heaven. But this is a mode of expression entirely accordant to Scripture. “We are complete in Christ, which is the head of all principality and power. We are buried with him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your sins, hath he quickened together with him. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that be above.” Therefore, in a figurative sense, the revivification of Christianity, when it was apparently annihilated, may be most fairly compared to a resurrection from the dead; (and except we suppose that this prophecy will receive its fulfilment through miraculous operation, it cannot possibly be explained in any other way;) and on the glorious revivification of the Christian cause, and its members being called by, as it were, a powerful voice from heaven, saying unto them, “Come up hither,” (a form of speech also not unfrequently employed in Scripture, which loudly calls on all who are risen with Christ in heart and mind, to ascend unto that heaven where Jesus sits enthroned at the right hand of his Father, “they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.” This figure of a cloud is also a mode of description agreeable unto

Scripture. "And an angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it, with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense," that is, the incense cloud which came with the prayers of the saints, "ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." (Rev. viii. 3, 4.) The prayers of saints are said to be "as incense, and the lifting up their hands as the evening sacrifice."

"When the spirit of life from God, that is, the spirit of Christianity, which was almost totally extinguished, shall revive, and our holy religion shall flourish in greater purity than it ever did before; when the temple of God shall be opened, and the ark of the testament shall be seen, as in ver. 19; when Christ, the true ark of our covenant, shall be more known, and the great mysteries of religion shall be more common and familiar than formerly either under the Old Testament dispensation, or during the reign of anti-christ;"*—then will this emblematic prophecy be illustriously realized; the churches, delivered from tyrannic persecution, will in heart and mind to heaven continually ascend. The prayers and praises of the saints will triumphantly ascend; and by angelic ministers be wafted up as in an incense-cloud unto the mercy-seat; beheld by enemies both human and infernal. And at the completion of this prophecy, there is reason to believe that the panic-struck multitude of un-

* Worthington's Sermons, vol. i. pp. 262, 263.

believers dwelling upon our earth will then be afflicted by some awful though not miraculous visitation—a visitation accomplished by the common laws of nature. For in the 13th verse it is said, that immediately upon the glorious triumph of Christianity, “In the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.” On this astonishing and triumphant revival of the Christian religion, and this immediate and tremendous convulsion of nature, with its destructive consequences, the affrighted remnant of the unconverted, who escaped this awful visitation, could no longer resist such irresistible evidence of its truth, became converts to Christianity, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

And this great event was there in triumph celebrated: “There were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” And it must not pass unnoticed its being recorded in the 8th chapter, immediately subsequent to the relation of the angel offering much incense with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne; and that the smoke or cloud of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand. That the angel took the censer, and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and there were voices, and thunderings,

and lightnings, and an earthquake;—extremely confirmatory of the truth of our figurative comment, as it appears highly probable that the occasion on which the angelic minister was so specially gifted with much incense, to offer with the prayers of all saints, was that of the glorious revivification of Christianity; because in the verse subsequent to that which recites the ascension of the witnesses in a cloud, and the verse subsequent to that which recites the ascension of the prayers of all saints in a cloud, the occurrence of the same awful and special judgment is very distinctly predicted as ordained to take place: “In the same hour that the witnesses ascended, there was a great earthquake.” (xi. 13.) “In the same hour that the prayers of all saints ascended from out of the angel’s hand, he took the censer and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth, and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.”

And at the final consummation of all prophecies, this we have now contemplated will receive a full, perfect, and literal fulfilment. On the last awful day, the Faithful and True Witness will himself descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God,—call forth with a loud voice his much beloved members from out of the sleep of death, to gloriously ascend in clouds, and meet their Lord in the air, and be for ever joined in indissoluble union to their adored Head. (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.)

Should our readers concur with us in feeling assured that the Old Testament vision and the

New Testament vision are one and the same vision; that the first is depictive of the glorious Trinity, and that the character of the two witnesses, as depicted in the second, is exactly correspondent to those of God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, Scripture itself has graciously condescended to supply us with images conveying ideas by material similitude that such an union as three in one, though utterly beyond the reach of man's unassisted reason to discover, may still be. And as a clearness of conception adds much to the comfort of our petitions, the Christian may, when addressing God in prayer, lift up the eye of faith unto the threefold candlestick; to the transcendent glory of the great Triune luminary—behold the Son presenting, the Father granting, the Holy Ghost conveying, the blessings prayed for down upon all below.

CHAPTER VII.

WE now proceed to remark that that very eminent writer, Dr. Blair, gives us the following caution: "Not to imagine that our present discoveries unfold the whole influence of the death of Christ. That this great event is connected with causes into which we cannot penetrate—that it produces consequences too extensive for us to explore. In all things we see only in part; and here, if any where, we see also through a glass darkly."*

But we must here request our readers to recollect the high illumination thrown over this (as Dr. Blair appreciates it, dark and mysterious) subject, by the observations resulting from our inspection of the Mosaic symbols. By these, should our conception of these wonderful symbols be esteemed just, it appeared that the universe is separated into three distinct divisions: first, our probationary heavens; secondly, the holy place, or intermediate heavens; and, thirdly, the sanctum sanctorum, or third and highest heavens;—that one high heavenly pontiff on earth, prefigured by the high legal priest, presideth over

* Vol. i. Sermon V.

the whole ; and that his see includes the universe of God ;—that all the offerings presented by the legal institutions were only shadowy emblems of the one perfect offering He offered on the cross ;—that should any of the intelligent probationaries inhabiting our heavens have deviated from the perfect prescribed path, that access was opened to them, in like manner as to us, unto the one cleansing laver, and participation of the propitiatory benefit procured by the spotless sacrifice stretched on the brazen altar, tendered unto them, that no probationary being could gain admission to the second and third heavens, without a passport from the great high heavenly Priest over God's own house above ;—that He alone could unbar the one celestial gate that opens into heaven ; and that an interest in his merits is essential for all erring probationers.

But the result of our last research having now ascertained that the rank of the illustrious being who died upon the cross was nothing less than that of Almighty God's own Son, one with his Almighty Father, would, independent of Dr. Blair's remarks, and the information derived from the Old Testament, most powerfully lead unassisted reason to suspect, that the effect of the propitiation procured through his most precious death, would be more commensurate with the greatness of the Almighty being who died upon the cross, than that of saving a remnant of the inhabitants of our poor little globe, and that it would extend its influence far far beyond the limits of our world. For we must repeat, that when we lift

up our eyes unto the volume of magnificence which night unfolds to view, contemplate on the glorious hosts of light, all shining to illumine worlds teeming with intelligent probationaries—can we conceive it probable, that all of these have passed their states of trial with unspotted innocence? that all of these have glorified their great and good Creator, by a triumphant passage through their probationary state? and that we alone, from out the countless myriads, have, by disobedience, fell? Now, supposing any among these to stand in need of an atoning intercessor, and our divine Redeemer to have gloriously vindicated his Almighty Father's honour, in one of the most feeble, most degraded natures that could be selected from out the countless beings inhabiting the vast infinitude of worlds, revolving in our nether starry heavens—did He not thereby fully, clearly, and effectually demonstrate to the heavenly hierarchs, principalities, and powers of the great heaven of heavens, that no nature was ever formed by its all-wise Creator, incapable of glorifying its great and mighty Former by a perfect delineation of virtue? and does not reason plainly dictate, that the propitiatory intercession of the blessed benignant being, who evinced perfection in one of the most frail, polluted natures He could select amidst the countless myriads passing through states of trial, would as fully and effectually procure pardon, and atone for all erring probationaries, as if the Son of God had individually invested himself in each degraded nature, for the purpose of proving it endued with

such energies and powers, as to enable it to glorify its great and good Creator, by overcoming evil by good? For if He did in any one fallen nature delineate perfection, He unquestionably could in any other similarly circumstanced: and St. Paul's argument equally holds good respecting them, and respecting the erring probationaries resident on our earth. For had He distinctly invested himself in each of these, for the purpose of proving it endued with the power of demonstrating perfection, then must Christ have offered himself often. "But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. ix. 25.) But New Testament assertion, (and which we have already, by our inspection of the legal symbols, been compelled rather prematurely to insert,) places this point very far beyond conjecture; for there is, perhaps, no one assertion on any point there stated, more clear and decided, than that which does proclaim, that the redemption we obtain through Christ's most precious blood, according to the riches of the grace of the Father, is not confined to our mortal race; but that it extends to all and every probationary being throughout the boundless universe who needeth such redemption. For it was the good pleasure of the Father which He purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth, even in him.

And to prevent the possibility of mistake on this momentous point, St. Paul, in his epistle to

the Colossians, delivers the following comprehensive and circumstantial detail: "For by him," (that is, Christ,) "were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible or invisible;" whether they be those radiant orbs which night unfolds to view, or those remoter and invisible regions that lie beyond our view; that is, wheresoever or howsoever situated, "whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him. And He is before all things, and by him all things consist. And He is the head of the body the church, (which, taken in this connexion, must mean the universal church, both militant and triumphant in first and highest heaven,) who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell:" and having made peace through the blood of his cross, (that is, having offered one propitiation for all moral pollution once for all,) by him to reconcile all things unto himself," (not unto one another, but unto himself; and clearly including all those things he had recapitulated, which needed reconciliation.) Then follows a repetition of the positive and redoubled assertion, "By him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

But that our small globe, from out the countless myriads revolving in our heaven, should have been the theatre on which the Son of God achieved the vast exploit; that human nature should have been the nature determined on by

the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, (Acts ii. 23,) for the nature wherein his almighty Son was to delineate perfection, are circumstances fraught with wonder. And we shall now offer a few observations tending to diminish the astonishment attendant on these very amazing considerations. Now we must here request our readers to keep in mind, that it was in a fallen nature our unassisted reason supposed the Redeemer's merits to procure atonement for all fallen probationaries in these our starry heavens; as a fallen nature must have been most, if not exclusively, adapted for the accomplishment of the purposes in question; for by the perfect Son of God's investiture in a degraded nature, He achieved the threefold purpose which procured propitiation: first, by restoring the degraded nature to its pristine perfection; secondly, proving it to be so restored, by therein delineating perfection; and thirdly, thereby vindicating the great Creator's honour. And we have already had occasion to remark, (vol. i. p. 304,) its being far more probable, that the Creator should be glorified by a large proportion of his intellectual offspring, passing their probationary states with safety and with honour, than that the Creator should have been dishonoured by a majority who fell.

Our blessed Lord himself, in parabolic form, sounded his feeble followers on this important point. After first declaring, that his business on our earth was to seek and to save that which was lost, he adds, "How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone

astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray?" (Luke xv. 4.) The proportion thus suggested by him who alone could know, exhibits, we think, a strong attestation to the truth of our supposition, and gives good ground to conclude, that the number of intelligents who have stood, greatly surpasses the number of those who have fell; and that though all we like sheep have gone astray, yet that there are many orders of probationary beings passing through their appointed trials with safety and with honour.

In the Revelations, it is recorded of the great red dragon, or in other words the devil, that his tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven, and levelled them with the earth: but not to draw an inference from this communication, having already found reason and Scripture uniting to prove it's being far more probable that the Creator should be glorified by a large proportion of intelligents, passing triumphant through their destined conflicts, than that the Creator should have been dishonoured by a majority who fell, we are, we conceive, justified in stating the conclusion propounded. Now if the atonement requisite for all erring probationaries could be alone procured in a degraded nature, and the number of worlds whose inhabitants have fell, are few in number when compared with those whose inhabitants have stood, it very greatly subtracts from the number of worlds adapted for the achievement of the objects now in question; and consequently, proportionably deducts from the wonder of our

world having been the world selected. It was further supposed to be in one of the most frail, most feeble, most polluted natures, that could be selected from out the vast infinitude of worlds revolving in our heavens, that the vindication of God's honour was effected; which supposition of course supposes a distinction in moral evil to exist among the fallen orders of probationary beings resident in our heavens. By contemplating the fallen probationaries inhabiting our earth, we perceive them exhibiting various shades and degrees of deviation from moral rectitude; for one who evinces very flagrant depravity, thousands exist who are utterly incapable of committing acts of gross atrocity. It may therefore be most reasonably inferred, that a similar distinction exists among the fallen orders of probationaries inhabiting our heavens, as individually exists among the fallen inhabitants of our globe. Many may be the worlds whose inhabitants have lost their innocence, and yet not contain one individual being whose nature has been so impregnated with evil, as is perhaps that of the most virtuous of mankind; and probably, very few may be the number of worlds where vice does weigh so heavy in the scale of moral turpitude as it does upon our earth; indeed, it may in none—which would exclusively render our world suited for the purposes in question. This, if it be the fact, is to us a most humiliating reflection; though it does at the same time entirely do away the astonishment produced by our world having been the world selected. Fur-

thermore, had not the great Atoner vindicated his almighty Father's honour in one of, or in the most degraded nature resident in our heavens, He could not have glorified the great and good Creator's honour in an infinite extent; and both the triumph and effect of the redemption procured through Christ's death, would have remained incomplete. For if any order of fallen probationaries evinced more depravity than what mankind displayed, the vindication elicited by Christ would not reach their case; the Redeemer's merits would not for them procure atonement; they, like the fallen angels, would remain in an unredeemed state. Besides, if the perfect Son of God had not demonstrated perfection in the most frail, most feeble, most polluted nature existing in our heavens, the triumph was incomplete.

We must likewise keep in mind, that the amazing purpose of Almighty God, was ordained to be accomplished in the dispensation of the fulness of times. Now, by the dispensation of the fulness of times, we conceive is meant, during the dispensation of time allotted for the duration of the present visible creation: for when we reflect, that the eternal Father has ever worked with his eternal Son, creations o'er creations must have eternally succeeded one another in infinite procession, long antecedent to the word which called into existence the glorious hosts which at this time occupy that portion of infinite space, our lower starry heavens; and the phraseology in which this communication is given demands our most particular attention, and does,

we think, clearly prove the justness of our comment : for the dispensation of the fulness of times, must mean an epoch in eternity succeeding creations, whose duration has been limited to a given period of time ; and that like as our's will ultimately be, have been already destroyed by one abortive crash.

Immediately preceding the dissolution of all things in the heavens we inhabit, an angelic herald is, we know, ordained to lift his hand to heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there should be time no longer. (Rev. x. 6.) And by this application of the word time, concurring to prove that the dispensation of the fulness of times determined on by Deity for the accomplishment of that astonishing purpose whereby He was to gather together in one all things in Christ, must mean that epoch in eternity during which our present visible creation occupy these first and lowest heavens. And by this astonishing purpose having been ordained to be fulfilled at one determined, fixed period, it again subtracts from the wonder of our world having been the world selected. We should moreover remember, that we have, throughout our survey of this wondrous subject, uniformly found that great event, the death of Christ, most intimately and almost exclusively connected with the invisible world ; and that it was the express purpose and intention of Almighty God thereby to demonstrate unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God. From the high eminence whereon these heavenly hierarchs

bend down to view the transactions passing in these our nether heavens; the selection of our globe for the theatre on which the highest nature was, in the lowest to demonstrate perfection; the selection of our globe for the high altar in the universe, on which the universal propitiation was ordained to be laid, may excite no more surprise than what we feel at Judea being the country selected on our earth; — no more surprise that our small world should be the little Bethlehem in the universe, and human nature the nature determined on by Deity for the fulfilment of his purpose, than what we feel at Bethlehem being the village, and Mary the woman, determined on by God. And an obvious observation here very palpably occurs, namely, that wheresoever this wonder was effected, this wonder would attach.

It might be objected to the foregoing doctrine, that by the Son of God illustrating perfection in our nature, and upon our earth, that we do by his example, being thus brought home so particularly to mankind, thereby exclusively receive a benefit that could not apply to the probationary habitants of any other worlds. And as God's ways are equal to all intelligents, it is not probable that human nature, above all others, should have been so very peculiarly favoured. The fact, however, stands most clearly proved from reason and from Scripture. And if human nature is one of the most degraded, or the most degraded nature existing in our heavens, it accounts for this distinguished favour being con-

ferred upon mankind; as none could so much need it, mortifying unto us as is this consideration. And let us here reflect how many worthies on our earth, without the enjoyment of the benefit in question, have been saved through performance of the rites enjoined by the typical religion; and that the advantage which we Christians now enjoy from Christ's most perfect example, is alone derived from the perusal of it as portrayed in the ever-blessed gospel. This gospel styles itself the everlasting gospel. For in the Revelation of St. John he thus recites: "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth." And are not the precepts of the everlasting gospel, like to its everlasting Author, everlasting and eternal? For is not the first and great commandment of the law and gospel, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" and also the second, which our divine Instructor declares is like unto the first, namely, "Thou shalt love thy fellows as thyself;" and on which two commandments, He himself proclaims, pends all the law and prophets. Commandments as indispensably necessary to be preached unto every intelligent throughout the boundless universe as they are to us. For in the performance of the first consists the happiness of every virtuous being; and the performance of the second is essential to the production of general felicity. Does not the precept which enjoins probationary beings "not to be overcome of evil, but to over-

come evil with good," equally apply to all probationaries as it does to us? May not the Lord reveal his glory, and shine round about fallen probationaries on other globes, as he did on ours; attended by multitudes of the celestial hierarchs praising God in the highest, and publishing the joyful tidings of good-will to them, as they did to us? For if angelic ministers are delegated from out the midst of heaven to preach the everlasting gospel on our earth, we may most reasonably infer them commissioned to preach it in a far wider and more extended sphere than one poor little globe? Do not thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand angels stand before the throne of God? And are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be salvation's heirs? And does not the infinite space now occupied by the bright hosts of light, which lie pervious to our view, exhibit a space for action, and objects whereon to exercise benevolence, commensurate to the countless numbers of the glorious beings sent forth to minister unto salvation's heirs, by the glorious God of heaven? Did not the Lord himself descend upon mount Sinai, and shine forth from Paran, with ten thousand of his saints, to give a fiery law? Yea, "He loved his people; all his saints are in his hand." (Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3.) And are not the whole family in heaven and in earth created for his pleasure, and alike the objects of his love and care, as is the human race? Was not the religion ordained to typify the spotless sacrifice Christ offered on the cross, and through the blood of

which God reconciles unto himself all things both in heaven and in earth, administered to man through the disposition of angels? And if these did thus administer to man, they are unquestionably qualified to administer the same blessed tidings of salvation tendered to every other being, through the death of Christ, requiring participation of the benefit procured by the general atonement.

There is good ground to conclude that previous to the death of Christ the typical religion received from heaven, was the universal religion of these lower starry heavens. For, as before observed, there can be but one religion for erring probationaries throughout the boundless universe, namely, previous to the universal propitiation being offered, representative rites to pre-show that great event—and, since it has been offered, commemorative rites, to keep up the remembrance of it. Which conclusion Scripture powerfully warrants; for when David, by the Holy Ghost, pre-shows the general consummation, he does it in the following remarkable terms: “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth; that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself.” (Psal. l. 3—6.) We thus see the first named summons addressed to the heavens, and our earth just mentioned as included in the number of those

hosts, all teeming with intelligents, and who by sacrifice (that is, by the performance of those symbolic rites which prefigured the great sacrifice) had made covenant with their God.

On the abolition of the typical religion, did not a new song reverberate through the blessed realms of light? for, in addition to the song of Moses, (the song that magnified the typical religion,) they then triumphant sung "the song of the Lamb." Did not those Scriptures, (all of which were given by inspiration of God,) through their foreknowledge that God would justify the heathen through faith, previously preach the gospel unto Abraham? (Gal. iii. 8.) And does not St. Paul in the strongest terms denounce, that though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than that which the apostles have preached unto us, let him be accursed? (Gal. i. 8.) And may we not feel assured that one and the same gospel is preached unto all erring probationaries throughout the boundless universe? That the Almighty Being who has "established his faithfulness in the very heavens," (Psal. lxxxix. 2,) has imparted unto them, in like manner as to us, the knowledge of his nature and the manner of his existence? That help for all who need it has been laid upon one who is almighty,—on the great Heir of all things—the great "Shepherd of the sheep, who through the blood of the everlasting covenant, gathers together in one all things both in heaven and in earth," and makes their peace with God.

Let us also recur to former observations on the death of Christ, in which we took occasion

to point out, that at the wonderful era when this great event took place upon our globe, not one of its inhabitants, not even the apostles themselves, appear to have had the smallest comprehension of the illustrious rank of the noble sufferer, or the stupendous consequences to be effected by his death. The first persons who seem to have been at all enlightened were the penitent thief, whose sense of sin led him to supplicate the mercy of his Saviour and his God; and the Roman centurion and they that were with him, who, astonished by the earthquake and those things that were done, "feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." But Christ's intimate associates, who we might conceive most likely to have understood the constellation of wonders which, at the moment when the second glorious person in the blessed Trinity pronounced "It is finished," were fully accomplished, seem to have remained in complete ignorance; and to have been solely enlightened through what we term supernatural agency. Till an angel descended from heaven with a countenance like lightning, and rolled back the stone from the door of the sepulchre where the body of Jesus had been laid; and proclaimed unto the pious females who came early to the sepulchre, that He whom they sought was risen from the dead—till Jesus showed himself to his apostles subsequent to his resurrection; walked with them by the way; stood in the midst of them; bade them to behold his hands and his feet, to handle him and see that it was He himself; (and all

this after we know that He had been received into Paradise;) giving them many other infallible proofs, and had opened their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures,—they appeared nearly as ignorant of the nature and design of the great event which they had just witnessed, as were the idle gazers collected to behold it. But though the multitude of spectators assembled on our earth were totally uninformed of the stupendous mercies which the powers of darkness, through the agency of wicked men, were at that awful hour effecting, the heavenly hierarchs beheld, comprehended, and adored the astonishing event:—"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing," was the universal anthem sung throughout the heaven of heavens.

We should also keep in mind, that in our observations on this great event we had occasion to remark, that if that resplendent manifestation of the Creator's glory and consummate wisdom, demonstrated by the death and sufferings of Christ, were objects which the unerring mind deemed requisite to most publicly evince unto the highest orders of his celestial ministers, it was not unreasonable to suppose that an equal necessity must have existed for this exemplification unto every individual intelligent throughout the boundless universe, who could be benefited [by, or interested in, the wonderful display. Which supposition Scripture very fully supported; for we found the sacred pages not

only most clearly asserting that the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, were things into which the angels desired, with the most intense desire, to look, and fully comprehend, and that these great events were seen of angels; but also that when Christ blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances, nailed it to his cross, and thereby spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them, and that He did it openly, triumphing over them in it. And we must repeat, that the unqualified manner, and unlimited sense in which the word 'openly' is on this occasion used, does, we think, justify our supposition; by pretty plainly proving that that great event, the death of Christ, was viewed not only by angelic hierarchs, but also by intelligents of inferior orders—by all who could be benefited by, or interested in, the wonderful display. And who could be so benefited by, or interested in, the affecting and momentous scene, as the erring probationaries of these our nether heavens, if their salvation pended on the triumph gained by the great event, the vast effects of which we are now contemplating? This great event could not be, then, or was not, we are expressly told, transacted in a corner. (Acts xxvi. 26.)

We believe the Scriptures; we believe that all things are possible unto almighty God. We believe that Enoch from our earth was conveyed by God to heaven. We believe that Elijah was carried up to heaven by blazing seraphims. We believe that the heavens were opened to St.

Stephen, and that he beheld the Redeemer standing on the right hand of God. We believe that the apostle Paul was converted by a voice and a light from heaven. We believe that he was caught up from off our earth into the third and second heavens. If we do not believe all these things; if we do not believe the whole of the Scriptures, and in its full extent the omnipotence of God, Christ has himself pronounced that upon this account we shall for ever err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. And if we do but partially understand their wondrous communications, we shall never attain unto the knowledge of the truth. But if we do believe the events before recited, and in its full extent the omnipotence of God; there is nothing preposterous or irrational in believing that God could and would cause every erring probationary throughout our starry heavens (or at the least delegates from out each globe now occupied by fallen probationaries) to behold the constellation of wonders, the constellation of mercies, achieved by the death of his almighty Son. Are not "the chariots of God twenty thousand, even thousands of angels?" Did not these radiant convoys attend the Lord on Sinai? and are not their services in constant requisition? Could not they convey from, and reconvey to, their respective globes, erring probationaries, who, instructed, astonished, and enlightened by the amazing spectacle, would if endued by God, as were the apostles on our earth with power from on high, to prove the truth of what they had seen, and the explanation to them

revealed, by giving to their fellow beings miraculous proof of the truth of their assertions,) be nearly, if not just as well qualified to preach the glorious gospel of salvation unto the inhabitants of these globes, on which they themselves with them respectively do dwell, as were our apostles to preach the gospel to their fellow men inhabiting our earth?

We already had occasion to infer (vol. i. p. 307) from the analogy of operation which the Creator manifests throughout our footstool heavens, that it is highly probable that all its probationary inhabitants are formed after the law of a carnal commandment; and, consequently, that they are composed of twofold natures, as is the human race. Now, if this be the case, Christ's precepts and example may be every way equally adapted for their edification as it is for ours; they may be as susceptible of bodily sufferance as we are ourselves.

We could here wish our readers to cast again their eyes over pages 307—311 of vol. i. If the conclusions therein stated be esteemed just, it by them appears that all the inhabitants of our nether heavens are, alike to us, only destined to undergo a short, fleeting residence in them for the purpose of probation; that the trials which serve to constitute these states are most probably administered by the conflicting inclinations of their twofold discordant natures, exasperated by the same foul fiend who caused our degradation; and that on disobedience to the commands of their Creator, they have been made liable to the same

penalty we are doomed to endure, namely, the sufferance of death. If these remarks be true, they are in all these respects similarly circumstanced to the human race; and both the precepts and example of their blessed Lord are as exactly suited for their use and benefit as they are for ours. Are not all Scriptures given by inspiration of God? Cannot God inspire prophets and apostles to minister to them as He has done to us? And could not our Lord himself, though offered on our earth, vouchsafe himself to preach pardon, peace, and salvation to other immortal spirits imprisoned within degraded natures, and who are prisoners of hope like as we now are. (1 Pet. iii. 19.)

And indeed, the closer we inquire into the subject now before us, the more reason we perceive for concluding, that a general analogy of circumstances equally pervades the intellectual, as we know it does the natural system of the probationary heavens. Their hosts were formed together; for God himself declares, "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands have stretched out the heavens, and all their hosts have I commanded." (Isa. xlv. 12.) These, it is positively affirmed, are to be destroyed together, judged together, and redeemed by one and the same Saviour. And if led astray by the same tempter, of which we think there is no doubt—for Christ, we are expressly told, was manifested for the very purpose of destroying the works of the devil—to behold the glorious triumph obtained over him by Christ's death upon the

cross, must have been a scene most highly important to be beheld by those over whom he had obtained a triumph; and this victory is that identical and most momentous fact, which Scripture itself proclaims to have been so openly displayed. For when Christ spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it; the effects of all their operations having been utterly destroyed, and they reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, to the general judgment day;—all of which great events, every erring probationary is equally interested in, as is the human race, and are doubtless as fully informed of as we are ourselves. And if the same typical religion has been dispensed unto them, as was unto mankind, and the same gospel preached as has been imparted unto us,—suppositions which Scripture fully warrants—“For thy word, O Lord, is true from the beginning; and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever;” (Ps. cxix. 160;) “Thy word, O Lord, is settled for ever in heaven;” (cxix. 89;) “Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever;” (cxix. 152;) they are, in all respects, equally enlightened on those subjects whereon pendeth their salvation, as is the human race.

CHAPTER VIII.

IF after all that has been said, it should be still maintained that we, from having had our Lord in human nature and before our eyes so evidently, as St. Paul expresses it, set forth and crucified among us,* do enjoy advantages which could not attach unto the inhabitants of any other globe, and that because we have seen, (as our Lord himself observed,) we have believed; yet we must allow their title to the benediction He at the same time pronounced: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John xx. 29.)

But stupendous as are the consequences which we conceive both reason and scripture have been already found most clearly uniting to prove effected by the death of Christ, yet we still must not lose sight of that scriptural assertion, which announceth further wonders; for St. Paul, (as stated heretofore,) records this great event as according to the eternal purpose purposed by the

* St. Paul's observation to the Galatian converts is equally applicable to us as it was to them, as the Galatians were not eye-witnesses of the astonishing transaction.

infinite and eternal God, which He purposed in himself in Jesus Christ our Lord; rendering it highly reasonable to conclude, that the eternal purpose of the infinite and eternal God would correspond with the eternity and immensity of the infinite Purposer.

And having now ascertained that this astonishing purpose was achieved by no less a being than God's own infinite and eternal Son, it also appears on that account highly reasonable to conclude, that its fulfilment was productive of infinite and eternal consequences; for the magnitude of the eternal purpose of the infinite and eternal God, achieved by his infinite and eternal coadjutor, we must conclude commensurate with both their eternity and their infinitude; the truth of which conclusion, Scripture we think will be found, in the examination into which we now shall enter very fully, to ascertain.

In that invaluable auxiliary to our inquiry on the Trinity, we found unassisted reason clearly deducing the eternity of the Almighty Son of God, from the following considerations; namely, that if the felicity of the paternal Deity was rendered infinitely perfect by his union with the Son, the Son must essentially be eternal; for were not the Son eternal, we must suppose a time existing before that felicity commenced—a supposition entirely inconsistent with the declared nature and attributes of him, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And by the same argument, unassisted reason is very clearly led to conclude the eternal existence of beings subordi-

nate to the Trinity; for if the felicity of the Trinity does consist in imparting of felicity, we must conclude the eternal existence of subordinate beings, or suppose a time to exist before that felicity commenced, which is alike inconsistent with the nature and attributes of him who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. No one supposes that the goodness of God will ever have an end; and it is equally inconsistent with right reason, to suppose a time existed before the goodness of God commenced its operations.

We therefore do conceive it most consistent with right reason to conclude, that the great I Am, the great eternal wheel has ever turned, and will for ever turn; has ever caused, and will for ever cause the existence of intelligents, on whom to exercise the unceasing benignity of his unbounded love; and that the illimitable ocean of infinite space has ever been, is now, and will for ever be, commensurate to the reception of the eternal and infinite productions, expanding from the infinite and eternal wheel, commensurate to contain the infinite and eternal operations of him who rides eternally the circuit of the heavens;—the justness of which conclusion is clearly proved from Scripture. For a personage and character is therein, in three distinct portions of it, by three distinct inspired authors, and at three distinct periods, most minutely portrayed—exactly answering to the supposition suggested by our unassisted reason. The wonderful relations we shall now transcribe:

“ And Melchisedek, king of Salem, (afterward

Jerusalem,) brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed Abram, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God." (Gen. xiv. 18, 19.) "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek." (Ps. cx. 1, 4.) "He that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee, saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek. Who in the days of his flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest, after the order of Melchisedek, of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb. v. 5—14.)

In the foregoing preface to the wonderful communication we are about to state, it is observa-

ble that St. Paul, though allowing that the subject he was entering upon was hard to be understood, yet by no means intimates that it was impossible to be understood; and the reason to which he ascribes the impediment stated, was the dullness of his hearers, whom he gently reproves; this dullness being owing to their having neglected the cultivation of those faculties and powers, the due exercise and improvement of which would have removed it, rendered them skilful in the word of righteousness, and thereby fitted them for the reception and conception of those sublime and wonderful truths which St. Paul denominates strong meat; and which intellectual food they would readily have digested, had they lived in the habitual exercise of their intellectual powers.

Subsequent to the preface we have now so briefly commented on, are some annexed exhortations to hold fast the Christian faith, “to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek. For this Melchisedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is, king of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having

neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God ; abideth a priest continually."

And after some observations on the Levitical priesthood, not immediately connected with the object now in view, he adds, " If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should arise after the order of Melchisedek, and not to be called after the order of Aaron ? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law : for He of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident, that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood ; and it is yet far more evident, for that after the similitude of Melchisedek, there ariseth another Priest, who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God. And inasmuch as not without an oath He was made priest : (for those priests were made without an oath ; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not re-

pent. Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek.) For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

Now, words cannot describe more clearly and emphatically the eternal existence of intelligents subordinate to the Trinity, than the relation just inserted, which does, we think, form a most complete coincidence with the conclusions suggested by our unassisted reason; and thereby entirely supersedes the necessity of endeavouring to explain away the palpable meaning of St. Paul's description of that very extraordinary personage Melchisedek, whom, we in the first instance find Moses denominating a priest of the most high God—a title never given to any other worthy of the antediluvian era, and therefore must mean, that he was priest of the most high God, in a sense entirely different from, and paramount to that in which the title of priest was ever given to any other being on our earth, save our blessed Lord. And from the subsequent relation, we cannot but conclude Melchisedek a celestial being of an eternal order, who, descending to our earth, became incarnate in the human nature of the king of Salem.* For the

* Should the conclusion stated, namely, that Melchisedek became incarnate in the human nature of the king of Salem, be held a doubtful point—yet we cannot give up the belief of his eternal origin, of his being a celestial priest sent down from heaven to earth; and that if he was not enveloped within our frail mortality, that he at least assumed its form, which in

recital is too express, we think, to admit of any doubt. Melchisedek, we are informed, was with-

almost, if not every instance of angelic embassies, was always done by angels, though they, we know, are spirits. It was in human form that Abraham entertained three angels, whom the history calls three men. (Gen. xviii. 2.) The two angels who came to Lot (Gen. xix. 1) are also called men. When Jacob wrestled with an angel, the angel is called a man. The angel who measured the temple to Ezekiel is also called a man. (Ezek. xl. 4.) In Daniel ix. 21, the angel Gabriel is called the man Gabriel; and in x. 16, Daniel thus records: "And behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips;" and again, 18th verse, "Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man; and he strengthened me." The angel who announced the resurrection of our blessed Lord unto the pious females, appeared like a young man, clothed in a long white garment. "And when they had prepared spices and came to the sepulchre, and others with them, behold two men in shining garments."

These instances are amply sufficient to prove the truth of the premised assertion; and as all angels are ministering spirits, the title of priests may be applicable to all of these high angelic ministers; and that it is conferred on many of these celestial ministers is an unquestionable truth. The legal priests were patterns of things in the heavens; and the songs of the redeemed ascribe praise unto the Lamb, who has made them kings and priests to God. Therefore should Melchisedek not have become incarnate in the human nature of the king of Salem, it does not in the least affect the justness of the conclusion respecting his high eternal and celestial origin. But as Melchisedek was an undoubted type of our eternal, blessed Lord, we cannot but adhere to the opinion just propounded, namely, that he was incarnate in the human nature of the king of Salem; more especially, as he appears to have reigned as king of Salem, which implies a residence in our world entirely different from the transient visits of angelic messengers, and is so described. Josephus styles him "the king of Solyma, called Melchisedek," (which is as much as to say, the Just King,) for in

out father, without mother, without descent: now this must mean, that he was so in his heavenly, spiritual nature—must mean that he was without father, without mother, without descent, in the same light as when the great high heavenly Priest over God's own house above himself affirmed on earth, "Before Abraham was I am;" though in his human nature he was born of woman, and descended down from Abraham. He must, therefore, by the foregoing declaration, mean that his heavenly nature was pre-

truth he was no less, but was held worthy, by reason of his justice, in all men's opinions, to sacrifice as the priest of the Most High God. "Solyma, in process of time," he adds, "was called Jerusalem." And the title of the Just King was a most appropriate one for him who was a type of the divine Messiah. But St. Paul's communication places this point, we think, very far beyond conjecture, by speaking of Melchisedek as a man in the same manner as he does of Abraham; (and in also the same manner in which our blessed Lord is so continually styled a man, and that by the assumption of our nature he unquestionably was.) "Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils;"—thus speaking of Melchisedek as man, in a sense quite different to that in which it is applied to angels, on their assuming, during their transient visits to our earth, the appearance or similitude of man. We do therefore think the justness of our conclusion fully established, and shall therefore in the ensuing pages, when speaking of that wonderful personage Melchisedek, consider him as typifying our blessed Lord, by living on our earth, and acting on it in a twofold nature, heavenly and human. The remoteness, conciseness, and obscurity of the history, not supplying any information respecting his incarnation, we must remain ignorant on that point; and which is indeed utterly unimportant. Respecting that of Christ, the account is very explicit, and of the most paramount importance to us all.

existent to his human one. And his heavenly nature we have found Scripture distinctly asserting to have eternally existed; and that Melchisedek also in his heavenly nature eternally existed, is abundantly evident; for St. Paul, as though it were to prevent the possibility of misconception on this important point, proceeds further to state that Melchisedek “had neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.” Of the eternal existence of Melchisedek then, if words can express a meaning, there does not remain a doubt; and we even find St. Paul, as it were, redoubling the truth of this assertion; for he not only in the first instance compares Melchisedek unto our great eternal Priest, but in a subsequent passage he compares our eternal Lord unto Melchisedek. It is yet far more evident, he further states, “for that after the similitude of Melchisedek there ariseth another priest, who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment; but after the power of an endless life.” But though Scripture clearly asserts an existing similitude in this one particular (namely, their eternity) between our blessed Lord, and that eternal priest Melchisedek, we are by no means to infer that Melchisedek bears any nearer resemblance to our blessed Lord, in his nature, attributes, and station, than does a mighty river to the mighty ocean. The very Epistle in which this wonderful recital is given, commences by asserting, in the strongest language, the divinity of the almighty Son of God, and his high superiority over all

angelic beings; and as a priest he is also described in greatness and in glory as highly towering over the order of Melchisedek. Christ as a Son is Priest over his own house; He is the great high heavenly Priest that is passed into the heavens.* “The word of the oath maketh the Son High Priest, who is consecrated for evermore.” And though made High Priest after the order of Melchisedek, He is the great high heavenly primate over his own house, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named in heaven or in earth. God hath put all things under the feet of Christ; the great high heavenly Priest is made higher than the heavens. It is therefore only in his eternity that the Son of God is like unto Melchisedek, or any other eternal priest of the Melchisedekian order. For the word ‘order’ clearly implies the existence of many Melchisedeks in the third and highest heavens. And if, as before observed, the felicity of Deity consists in imparting of felicity, countless may be the number of those eternal priests who

* A question might here be asked rather of curiosity than of importance—If Melchisedek was a celestial being incarnate in our nature, on his removal from our earth, either by death or translation into heaven, into what region (were he taken from our earth like Enoch and Elijah) may we suppose his mortality was received? To this we answer, as scriptural declaration so expressly states that the Forerunner, even Jesus, though made High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek, alone entered within the last separating veil, we cannot suppose that Melchisedek’s humanity has been received as yet into the sanctum sanctorum; but that, with the other worthies of our mortal race, (if translated from our earth,) it still abides in Paradise.

constitute that high eternal order, the order of Melchisedek.

This subject also propounds many other interesting questions respecting that illustrious priest Melchisedek; but as his eternity is the exclusive point connected with the object now in view, we must reserve our further observations on this wondrous personage to a future page. That he was an eternal being has been proved beyond a doubt; and that He who with his eternal Father has worked hitherto, has eternally provided accommodations for his eternal offspring, is also a point that cannot admit of doubt. We read in the New Testament of buildings of God, houses not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And the deductions of reason and the assertions of Scripture both unite to prove that creations o'er creations have ever and eternally succeeded one another in infinite procession.

Now, as all intelligents are doomed to pass probationary states, it is highly probable that many intelligents, long antecedent to the foundation of our world, may have tarnished their innocence; or worse, many may have by disobedience fallen. And should this have been the fact, and they require the benefit of an atoning intercessor, does not reason plainly dictate that the merits of the Redeemer could alike stretch back to reach their case with equal efficacy, as we know it stretches back to reach the case of those who sinned on our globe previous to the grand propitiation being offered on the cross for the sins of the whole world; and that the merits of the

Saviour were in eternal operation, the Scripture does, we think, very clearly ascertain; for that asserts that even the human race were chosen by God in Christ before the foundation of our world: "Having predestinated us (that is, through his foreknowledge how all intelligents would demean themselves, without infringing on the freedom of their wills—for it was those he did foreknow that he did predestinate) unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ; both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." A declaration of infinite and eternal import. A declaration including all things, past, present, and to come. And as Scripture clearly proves that the infinite and eternal purpose of the infinite and eternal God was in operation as respecting man before the foundation of our world, that Christ was verily fore-ordained to be to us a Saviour before the foundation of our world, we do with certainty conclude that it was in eternal operation in behalf of all who may have sinned before the foundation of our world; (except the apostate angels;) that Christ was verily fore-ordained to be to them a Saviour from all eternity;

and that they were chosen by God in Christ from all eternity. Which truths the infinite declaration does most positively proclaim,—“All things are gathered together by God in Christ, both in heaven and in earth, even in him.”

Our unassisted reason did, in a former page, conclude that the magnitude of God's eternal purpose would correspond with the immensity of the purposer. And by this amazing communication a plan is indeed developed commensurate in magnitude with the infinite infinitude of its infinite purposer—with the infinite infinitude of its infinite achiever. A plan producing consequences like its eternal Author, “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;” reaching backward, stretching forward; including in one grasp all things, past, present, and to come. A plan wonderfully ordaining, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, or in other words, the fulness of creations, the astonishing union of the highest and lowest natures; and which, by the highest in the lowest delineating perfection, embraces in its influence all intermediate shades, degrees, and stains of guilt, from the slightest speck unto the deep-died crimson sin; and by one grand atonement for all moral pollution, “offered once for all;” (Heb. x. 10;) by one offering on the cross perfects for ever them that are sanctified; by opening one fountain for sin and uncleanness; by commanding all, past, present, and to come, to wash and be clean;—God has achieved a work well worthy of Omnipotence, and cut it short in righteousness. (Rom. ix. 28.) And this everlasting fountain, in

effect, has flowed evermore, and evermore will flow. The great high heavenly Priest over his own house above, has now by his own blood entered once for all into the holiest of holies, and ever pleads its merits; “and having made peace by the blood of his cross, God reconcileth all all things to himself by Christ. By him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” (Col. i. 20.) “And has set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places; far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named; and hath put all things under his feet. For all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. The fulness of him that filleth all in all. The word of the oath maketh the Son High Priest, who is consecrated for evermore.” (Heb. vii. 28.) And this glorious coadjutor in God’s eternal plan, “abideth a Priest continually; and because he continueth ever, he hath an unchangeable priesthood;” like his eternal self, “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Which declaration, exclusive of the weight of other evidences we have just brought forth, is alone sufficient to prove the eternal consequences procured through the blessed Redeemer’s merits. For did his intercession merely obtain salvation for mankind; if the redemption he obtained was not productive

of eternal consequences, why should the eternal Saviour abide, and act as priest continually? But He has other sheep to bring which are not of our fold; “and there shall be one fold and one shepherd,—that great Shepherd of the sheep, who through the blood of the everlasting covenant, makes peace for all with God.”

And indeed an attentive reader of St. Paul's Epistles to the Ephesian and Colossian converts, will perceive the human race mentioned rather as included in the benefit procured by Christ's merits, than as the primary objects which occasioned his sufferings. For immediately subsequent to the declaration announcing that “in the dispensation of the fulness of times all things were gathered together by God in Christ, both which are in heaven and in earth,” he adds, “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance.” (Eph. i. 11.) And again, in Col. i. 20, 21, after proclaiming that God Almighty, “through the blood of Christ reconciles all things to himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven,” he in like manner subjoins, “And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death.”

It will be remembered that we have uniformly presupposed the wondrous declaration which announces that “God reconcileth to himself all things in Christ Jesus,” to clearly mean all things that stand in need of an atoning Mediator.—“Those that be whole need not a phy-

sician, but those that are sick. Christ came not down to us to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." These all, we know, are saved through the merits of the Saviour.

But when we contemplate upon the infinite purity of the divine nature, the infinite merits of the infinite Redeemer, and the infinite inferiority of all created beings, to the infinite Trinity,—that in the sight of Godhead the heavens are not clean, and that even his highest angels are charged by him with folly—Mr. Reynolds may be just in his assertion, "that the angels receive confirming grace in Christ."* All that is past, is now, and ever will be, may require some interest in the universal atonement; and it is certain that Scripture strongly favours the foregoing opinion; for the 5th chapter of the Apocalypse thus records, "And I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne, a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much because no man"—no intelligent being either in heaven or in earth—"was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of

* See Reynolds on Angels, p. 78.

the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes,* which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.† And I beheld and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and

* The number of eyes described in Zechariah's vision as running to and fro throughout the whole earth.

† By reigning on earth, we conceive, it must mean that they have been made, through the merits of the Lamb, rulers over many things, in a far more extensive sphere than merely on our earth.

power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."

As the whole of this sublime description appears to us so eminently confirmatory of the justness of the position advanced respecting those mysterious subjects, the Trinity, incarnation, and universality of the redemption procured through the great Redeemer's merits, we claim our reader's indulgence for humbly offering what we conceive a just interpretation thereof.

The beloved apostle John commences his relation of this wondrous vision by declaring that he saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back-side, sealed with seven seals. This mysterious book, held in the right hand of the paternal Deity, we may presume contained the eternal and amazing plan, which had for ages and for generations lain hid in God in Christ;* for St. John next saw a strong angel, a celestial being of the highest and most illustrious order, demanding with a loud voice, "Who is able to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" Who is there, throughout the boundless universe, whose merit entitles their approach unto that pure and spotless Being in whose sight the heavens are not clean, and who even charges his highest hierarchs with folly? Who is there whose pretensions can entitle them

* "For in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."—Colos. iii.

to pry into the counsels of omnipotence? Heaven's mightiest potentates all humbly shrunk back abashed, and St. John wept much because none was found worthy to open the book, neither to look thereon. "And one of the elders said unto him, Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Jehovah's high intent, which he purposed in himself, will now be accomplished; the mystery of his wisdom be unfolded to the mighty powers and principedoms of the great heaven of heavens, by the redemption purchased with Christ's most precious blood. They will now understand that this wonderful achievement has been wrought through the union of the highest to the lowest nature. The Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath glorified the Creator by delineating perfection; and hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seals thereof. "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders," those high eternal beings of the Melchisedekian order, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain,—stood our glorified humanity, closely approximated with Deity; though displaying some outward token, some illustrious emblem of its glorious victory obtained through sufferings, but now advanced to the height of dignity—"having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth;"* having every

* This description of the Lamb exactly corresponds with that recited in the prophecy of Zechariah of paternal Deity.

power and property which appertain to Deity. God and man are one Christ. Our glorified humanity is now become the spiritualized appendant upon God the Son. "And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him who sat upon the throne." This unfailing intercessor instantly prevailed with his almighty Father; and in the weak, yet now glorified nature which had vindicated the great Jehovah's honour and glorified his name, asserted his high right to take the book from him who sat upon the throne. "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts,"—those transcendently high and glorious intelligents,—“and the four and twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song,”—a song proclaiming the glorious victory the Lamb had just obtained,—“saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.”

This appears a full confirmation of the justness of Mr. Reynolds' position, namely, that the angels receive confirming grace in Christ. For in the triumphant anthems which now ecstatic burst from heaven's highest dignities, their transcendent elevation is ascribed unto the slaughtered Lamb. Thus concurring with the scriptural assertion that in God's sight the heavens are not clean, and that he chargeth even his highest angels with folly; rendering it almost, if not entirely certain, that the highest orders of intellectual beings, those

who have stood, as well as those who have fallen, (the apostate angels excepted,) may require some interest in the great Redeemer's merits; and that "the whole family in heaven and in earth" are "accepted in the Beloved."

The waters that issue from out the sanctuary, "from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the fore-front of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar;" expanding and expanding into a great and mighty river that could not be passed over, "and go down into the sea; which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And by the river, upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed; it shall bring forth new fruit, according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine." (Ezek. xlvii.) A prophetic parallel to that with which the sacred volume closes:— "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as chrystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of the great heavenly Jerusalem. And on either

side of the river was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (Rev. xxii. 1, 2.)

CHAPTER X.

SINCE it hath been the good pleasure of God, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, to reveal to man this mystery; let not man reject it. For we may reasonably conclude that it would not have been God's good pleasure to reveal a mystery we could not understand, or profit by withal. We do not attain unto the knowledge of arts and sciences without arduous mental labours, and yet the book of God is often closed, and all the wonderful and most important information it contains is laid aside without the smallest pains employed to understand its meaning. The doctrine of the universality of the atonement will be found a most eminent remover of difficulties. For when we reflect upon the infinite benefits procured through the infinite Saviour's merits, we cease to wonder that the infinite purpose of Almighty God should have been effected by his infinite Son. It is also a full and perfect reconciler of assertions which appear somewhat discordant: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the

gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it :” but “a remnant will be saved.” Yet it is foretold, that when God shall make his Son “an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied : by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many ; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.” (Isa. liii. 10—12.) “He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high,” for “he shall sprinkle many nations.” (lii. 13, 15.) “Of the increase of his government there shall be no end ;” (a prophecy which cannot apply to our world, which we know will come to an end.) His kingdom shall be established “with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever : the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.” (Isa. ix. 7.)

Nor let the infinite universality of the benefits procured by the great Redeemer’s merits lessen our sense of individual obligation ; if the whole family in heaven and in earth are called by his name and created for his pleasure, and the tender love of God extends over all his works, is it unreasonable to believe, that all his works should participate in the benefits derived from the most tender instance of his love ? After all the Saviour’s sufferings, all his sorrows, is it not lawful for him to do what He will with his own ? If it is his will that the universe should partake in the benefit

resulting from his triumph, does it in the smallest degree derogate from his tender love to us? Are our eyes to be evil, because his are infinitely good? We do not think, when kneeling at the sacred altar to memorialize Christ's death, and each for himself petitions for participation of the benefits derived from his merits, that our individual obligation is in the least diminished, because all those beside us alike send up their supplications to the throne of grace, and share with us God's mercy. Or is it lessened in our estimation, because the inhabitants of every parish, every county in the kingdom wherein we reside, and of every kingdom on our globe, are with us participators, or have we less reason for fervent gratitude? Why should it then subtract from our thankfulness, that the inhabitants of other worlds should with us participate this mercy? And as we believe that all who have ever lived, now live, or ever will live on this our earthly clod, can obtain salvation through the Redeemer's merits alone, why should it excite more wonder, that all who have ever lived, now live, or ever will live, throughout the boundless universe, should also obtain salvation through the same glorious means; and that all intelligents should be accepted through the eternal Saviour's victory?

The arguments adduced, and the conclusions we have found so fully confirmed by Scripture, we in all humility conceive within the reach of common understandings; what has passed, is passing, and will for ever pass on our little globe, till time shall be no more, presents us with an

epitome of what has passed, is passing, and will for ever pass, throughout infinite space through all eternity; all accepted in virtue of the propitiation covenanted to be offered—all now accepted in virtue of the propitiation that has actually been offered. And the great event which caused the consummation of this first of blessings, took place as relating to our world, in the dispensation of the fulness of years; as relating to eternity, in the dispensation of the fullness of creations: and to him who purposed and him who fulfilled the wise and vast design, all time and times are as nothing; a thousand years are but as yesterday.

Our love, gratitude, and praise ought then to be heightened and augmented, rather than diminished, by contemplation on this glorious subject, and a review of God's unbounded mercy, in ordaining one grand and universal propitiation for sin. Our love, gratitude, and praise should be highly augmented, by reflecting, that our very sinful race have been included in the benefit procured by God's unspeakable gift; for should the conclusions stated have been esteemed just—if Christ had not assumed our nature, or a nature in which vice did weigh as heavy as it does in ours, we could not have shared the benefit of his propitiation. But as St. Paul well observes, after enlightening the Ephesian converts with their interest in the Saviour, that this wonderful and infinite purpose of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as respecting us, abounds in wisdom and in prudence: though he then immediately proceeds to declare, that God had made

known unto the apostles the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which He purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth, even in him. Nor does the fact of the Redeemer's merits, being for the most part spoken of in the Scriptures as though they did exclusively apply unto our world—that in the Scriptures designed for man's use, it should be enforced on man that Christ was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities; that his life was laid down for the sins of the world; that He gave himself for us; that Christ our Pass-over was sacrificed for us, (1 Cor. v. 7;)—any more oppose our belief of that most important truth, the universality of the atonement, than does the individual application of Christ's merits at the sacramental altar, by him who administers to each communicant, because the minister does thus address each person unto whom he presents the hallowed elements, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee," preclude all those who kneel beside us receiving the same benefit. So in like manner, because the body of the Lord Jesus Christ was given for our world, it does not at all preclude the inhabitants of all other worlds partaking of the benefit.

And beside the positive scriptural assertions which have already and repeatedly been inserted, there are many other passages, which though they apparently apply solely to man, yet are

equally applicable to all sinning probationaries, as unto ourselves. This is a true saying, and worthy of all men and of all other beings to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. If any man or any other being sin, both we and they have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for all sin: "For in that he died, he died unto sin once for all." (Rom. vi. 10; Heb. x. 10.) And when the great Ordainer of the holy communion appointed that blessed ordinance, his own words were, "Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you: drink ye all of this cup, for this is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins," (Luke xxii. 19; Matt. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24;) first, individually applying the benefit procured by his most blessed body and blood, and after declaring that it was shed for many for the remission of sins. And when we compare the word 'many,' as uttered by him who was conjoined to infinitude, with the assertions of St. Paul, namely, that by the blood of Christ's cross God reconcileth all things unto himself, both in heaven and in earth; when we reflect that the same mouth pronounced the awful declaration that "strait is the gate and narrow the way that leadeth unto life," and that, as respecting us, few there be that find it, and yet proclaimed that his blood was shed for us and for many for the remission of sins;—we conceive, that if any additional attestation were wanting to prove the justness of the conclusions which reason suggested, and

Scripture in perfect coincidence asserted, as to the universal influence of the propitiation procured through Christ's death, it is very fully and amply supplied by the passages and comments last stated.

It is further observable, that the assumption of the human nature by the glorious Son of God, did not in the smallest degree diminish the glory of his divine nature—the union of the highest with the lowest nature was the identical and astonishing circumstance whereby Almighty God accomplished the infinite and eternal purpose which He purposed in himself; and it would be utterly repugnant to right reason to suppose, that by the filial Deity's obedience to the paternal one, that He should suffer degradation. On the contrary, his being found in fashion as a man, his humiliation, his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, are the very reasons assigned for his high and transcendent exaltation. On these very accounts, we are expressly informed it is, that God hath so highly exalted him, “and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

The name Jesus, it also must not pass unremarked, was given unto him on his assumption of the human nature, by special direction from the Most High; and the reason of his being thus denominated was also explained, namely, that He

should save his people from their sins—that Jesus was a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. From the astonishing moment when the divine nature became incarnate in the human one, when the Word was made flesh, we may presume that they acted in as close contact with each other as does the soul and body of man, (an union which, though comprised within ourselves, we do not understand;) we know not the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; we know not the works of God who maketh all. (Eccl. xi. 5.) And as the soul and body make one man, so God and man make one Christ: for we find the name Jesus equally applied in Scripture to both natures. Jesus of Nazareth is said to be a man approved of God by miracles and signs, which God did by him. Jesus himself as frequently calls himself the Son of man, as He does the Son of God: “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins: the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day. He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man. The Son of man shall send forth his angels.” But although he is the Son of man, he is also the Son of God. “Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.”

The veil of flesh did not, we thus perceive, prevent, any more than did the pillar of the cloud, the worship due unto the incarnate Deity from

being devoutly paid ; nor is the instance stated by any means a solitary one.* When adjured by the Jewish high priest to declare whether He was the Christ the Son of the blessed, Jesus said, I am. When hanging on the cross, He with his dying breath averred, that He was the Son of God, (Matt. xxvii. 43 ;) and to rectify mistaken conceptions of this mysterious subject, Jesus himself demanded of the pharisaic sect what they thought of Christ ? who was He ? On being answered, the Son of David, he replied, If David in spirit call him Lord, how is He then his Son ? Thus clearly explaining, that although He was enveloped in the weak, frail nature of the monarch David, yet that did not deduct from the glory of his divinity ; that He was in a sense completely paramount the Son of God ; and that his assumption of the human nature was therein to glorify his Almighty Father. The nature, however, in which the Almighty Son of God had so wonderfully achieved this most momentous purpose unto which He had become so intimately conjoined, taking its infirmities, carrying its griefs and sorrows, and had acted in such close contact, we may reasonably conclude would never be cast off, would ever be retained appendant to himself—conclusions which the Scriptures abundantly confirm. On the third day after the interment of his human nature, He gloriously re-assumed it, triumphantly rose again, subsequently ascended up

* We read the same, Matt. xv. 25 ; John ix. 38 ; Matt. xxviii. 17 ; Luke xxiv. 52. “ And they worshipped him.” (Matt. ii. 2.)

to his Almighty Father, (in sight of his disciples,) presented himself a spotless offering of sweet-smelling savour acceptable to God, and is now set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, to ever meditate for all who need his unfailing intercession. There is one Mediator between God and erring probationaries, the man Christ Jesus. But He is a man who widely differs from all other men; "a man more precious than fine gold, even a man, than the golden wedge of Ophir." (Isa. xiii. 12.) A man who mediates in a nature that is not untouched with the feeling of infirmities, but who has been tempted in all points like to probationaries, yet without sin.

On the traitor Judas leaving the holy table for the vile purpose of betraying his blessed Lord and Master, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." The glorious act was immediately performed; for it was ordained, we are expressly told, that the Holy Ghost should not be given till Christ was glorified. A comforter was indeed greatly wanted, to support the drooping spirits of his faithful servants, after the distressing event which deprived them of the presence of their adored Saviour. When taking leave of them, Jesus said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of their synagogues: yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service. And these things will they do unto

you, because they have not known the Father nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. A little while and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me; because I go to the Father. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again, a little while, and ye shall see me; and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say

unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow;" sorrowing at the near approach of my departure from you; sorrowing that for a season ye shall see my face no more: "but I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." And though while I was present with you, you were blessed, by personally praying to me for mercy and for succour, and the day is nigh at hand when ye shall ask me nothing as you now do face to face, yet verily, and in truth I say unto you, that "whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." (John xvi.) And in John xiv. 14, "I will give it you."

But though personal petition was presently to terminate, we know, on high authority, that his faithful servants still continued to worship and adore him. On his ascension into heaven, we are informed, his disciples worshipped him. (Luke xxiv. 32.) The first martyr in the Christian cause spent his last breath in praying his Redeemer to receive his Spirit, (Acts vii. 39;) and we must presume, that He had been well instructed unto whom it was most proper he should pray for to receive his spirit. This he proves by presenting his petition to his adored

Saviour, with whom he was to abide in Paradise, and who had ultimately pledged to present it unto God. St. Paul, when declaring that lest he should be exalted above measure at the abundance of the revelation that had been imparted to him, says, there was given him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure, (2 Cor. xii. 7,)—some distressing attack on his nervous system—as most commentators explain a thorn in the flesh; and certainly very justly. On this harassing occasion, we find him thrice petitioning him who was not untouched by the feeling of infirmities, having been himself encompassed with them, that this thorn might depart from him; thrice beseeching him, who had himself defeated Satan, and completely overcome him, that this cruel messenger might be no longer permitted to buffet and afflict him. And the Lord said unto him, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. The feeling excited in this eminent apostle by this gracious answer, was elicited by the following exclamation: Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ (clearly the Lord, unto whom he had been praying) may rest upon me.

The passages we have cited do, we conceive, abundantly prove the truth of the premised observation, namely, that the assumption of the human nature by the almighty Son of God, did not in the smallest degree diminish the glory of his divinity. Of spiritual glorified existence, as

we have before and frequently remarked, we are, and in our present state must ever remain, ignorant. Our conceptions are, however, not altogether left unassisted on this mysterious subject; for the man Christ Jesus was once on earth transfigured, and appeared in glory in the presence of three chosen witnesses. His face, on this glorious occasion, we are told, did shine as the sun; his raiment was white as the light; it became shining exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them. The fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening: thus demonstrating unto his followers, the nature of the glory which He had with the Father before the foundation of our world; and the glorious change that would be wrought on the frail nature wherein he was then enveloped, on its entrance in the holiest of holies. When St. Paul described the appearance of Jesus unto him, the recital is synonymous: As the apostle journeyed, suddenly there shined round about him a great light from heaven, declaring himself to be Jesus of Nazareth, whom he persecuted, but who now shined a light from heaven, which at mid-day did shine above the brightness of our sun. St. John's account likewise exactly corresponds: "The eyes of him who is the first and the last, who was dead and now liveth for evermore, were as a flame of fire; and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."

The prophet Daniel also describes to the same purport: "I beheld till the thrones were cast

down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garments were white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened." (Dan. vii. 9, 10.) The Scriptures also seem to intimate, that some glorious ray of glory from the glorious God of glory, communicates its radiance, and rests on those who have been admitted into his blessed, glorious presence. For when Moses descended down from Sinai, where he had conversed with God, the skin of his face shone; though he wist not that it did so. "And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them," and talked with them; "and till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face, (thus tyifying Christ;) but when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he took the veil off until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone, and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him." (Ex. xxxiv. 29—35.)

How spirits may assimilate with each other, in this world we cannot know, in this world we cannot understand; all we do know is, that they are immaterial; that God is a Spirit, that his Son is a Spirit; and that the human nature wherein the

Son of God so astonishingly condescended to invest himself, is now glorified and spiritualized ; and is for evermore appendant upon Deity in one glorious and spiritual union. God has now glorified our nature in his glorious self. (John xiii. 31, 32.) “ Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him ; if God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.”

The result of that amazing union, the highest and lowest natures, it thus appears, has not been degradation of the highest, but transcendent advancement of the lowest to a height of glory surpassing man's conception : it is now exalted and extolled, and is very high. (Isa. lii. 13.) Man now is fellow with the Lord of Hosts. (Zech. xiii. 7.) And this last survey clearly unfolds how the throne of David's kingdom is established for ever and for ever. A king descending forth from him, shall reign in righteousness ; and a man shall be as an hiding-place. (Isa. xxxii. 1, 2.) I will set up one shepherd, even my servant David ; I will make with him a covenant of peace, an everlasting covenant. (Isa. lv. 3, &c.) And I will raise up from him a plant of renown, the man whose name is the Branch ; (the man who is sometimes called the Branch of the Lord, and sometimes the Branch proceeding from the root of Jesse ; Christ proceedeth from both.) He shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the

counsel of peace shall be between them both. Alpha and Omega is now for evermore conjoined to the root and the offspring of David. (Rev. xxii. 13, 16.)

Our conceptions are still further guided on this astonishing subject by representations conveying ideas by material similitude; describing the glorified human nature assumed by the glorious Son of God, as now appendant upon Deity, in as close contact as is raiment on a man. And the portraiture also delineates this nature, this glorious ensign, (Isa. xi. 10,) as bearing some outward badge, some visible insignia of the victory obtained, of the glorious triumph God the Son achieved by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, over his infernal foe. Thus for evermore memorializing and demonstrating the essentiality of his sufferings, and the necessity of evil. “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?—I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?” “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself; and he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called the Word of God. And the spotless Lamb, for ever

stationed in that transcendent height of glory, the midst of the throne of God, and who in the preceding verse is declared to be the root of David, is likewise adumbrated as a lamb that had been slain. Thus exhibiting to the adoring universe an eternal manifesto of the tender love of God towards fallen probationaries, in that He spared not his own beloved Son, but gave him up for all; thus exhibiting an eternal commemorative of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, which was broken for them—an eternal commemorative of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for their salvation.

It should also not pass unremarked, that the high offices which the Son has been by his Almighty Father ordained to perform, could not have been in perfect equity and mercy by him achieved and fulfilled, had He not once been invested in a frail, feeble nature. The one Mediator between God and sinners is the man Christ Jesus; and had he not been himself encompassed with infirmities, erring probationaries could not have had an high priest who was touched with the feeling of infirmities. But the Father of mercies has abounded towards all such “in wisdom and in prudence.” They now have a merciful High Priest, who has himself an experimental knowledge of the arduous conflicts they are destined to endure—who has been tempted in all points like to what they have been, and is therefore well qualified to intercede for them with his almighty Father; and the Father “hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righte-

ousness by that man whom he hath ordained. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son," and hath given him authority to execute judgment. And for what reason has Infinite Wisdom thus empowered him? Because, we are expressly told, he is the Son of man; on this account he is as well qualified to judge probationaries in mercy and in equity, as he is to mediate for them with his all-perfect Father.

Furthermore, the weaker the instrument whereby the great Creator was glorified and honoured, the more illustrious was the victory obtained. All the operations of infinitude are infinite, and by the delineation of perfection in the most feeble, frail, polluted nature that could be selected from the infinitude of worlds, the paternal Deity was infinitely glorified. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts. God chooses foolish things to confound the wise; weak things to confound the mighty; and base things, and things which are despised, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. (1 Cor. i. 28.) Pride lost the angels heaven, humility regained it; and this humility was infinite. The infinite Redeemer not only took upon him the weakest, most debased nature, but he also took it on him under circumstances the most humiliating and afflicting to which it ever could be possibly exposed. On his birth he was in situation even levelled with the brutes; his cradle was a manger, his nursery a stable, "for there was no room for him in the inn." And when he became a man, as he himself ob-

served, though foxes had holes and birds of the air nests, he had not where to lay his head. The immediate ancestry, however, from whom Christ derived his human nature are (as it may be reasonably supposed they would be) highly distinguished by God: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos iii. 1, 2.) "What nation in the earth is like my people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people." (1 Chron. xvii. 20.) "Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last I am he." (Isa. xli. 8.) Unto thee, O Israel, "pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." (Rom. ix. 4, 5.) "Through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles. (By the incontestable evidence they elicit by the fulfilment of the prophecies respecting them of the truth of the Scriptures.) And if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness!" When they are converted, then will the evidences blaze bright indeed. (The sign of the times very strongly intimates that this event is now at no great distance; but that ere long "the beast," which our best commentators in these days explain to be infidelity, together with "the false prophet," shall be both cast down. (Rev. xix. 20.) On this glorious spread and revi-

vification of the Christian religion, great voices will proclaim in heaven that the kingdoms of our world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. (Rev. xi. 15.) Thus will this illustrious event be celebrated in the celestial regions. They are the good olive-tree; and if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. Though blindness in part is happened unto them, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, yet all Israel shall be saved; for, as concerning the gospel, they still remain enemies for our sakes, they are nevertheless beloved for the fathers' sakes. (Rom. xi.) "Thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen; the seed of Abraham my friend." (Isa. xli. 8.) "And the house of David shall be as God." (Zech. xii. 8.)

In the course of this last research having found reason and Scripture uniting to prove, not only the eternal existence of the second blessed person in the glorious Trinity, but also the eternal existence of beings infinitely subordinate in their nature and endowments to the glorious Trinity, it must be observed that eternal beings,—beings abiding the same continually; who are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; who are made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life; having neither beginning of days nor end of life; never could have had a primeval state of existence, and consequently the probationary trials ordained by Infinite Wisdom to test their virtue, must have been, may be now, and will for ever be, by him

administered, during whatever period of their existence Infinite Wisdom saw such administration most conducive towards the ultimate production of their individual happiness, as well as of general and universal good. Now, from Scripture information, there does appear much reason to conclude that the determined trials eternally purposed by paternal Deity for these to undergo, did and do consist in ordaining and appointing such to migrate from the blessed realms of light, and peace, and love, to worlds inhabited by fallen probationaries. At least, in the two instances of this kind that occurred upon our globe, namely, the incarnation of the eternal priest Melchisedek and the incarnation of our blessed Lord, we know with certainty this was the mode determined on by an all-wise, infinite God.

That Melchisedek was a celestial and eternal being has been already proved from reason and from Scripture, which still further enforces our attention to that wondrous personage Melchisedek, by admonishing us to consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils; and verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the offices of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham; but He whose descent is not counted from them, received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes,

but here he receiveth them of whom it is testified that he liveth ; “ made like unto the Son of God, and abiding a priest continually.” That Melchisedek was an illustrious type of Christ, has, by our ablest commentators, always been allowed. He concentrated in himself a twofold nature, human and celestial : and this latter nature had eternally existed : before Abraham was he was ; and he like Christ descended from the heavens ; and in these instances, singly and most eminently typified our ever blessed Lord.

Dr. Doddridge’s comment on this wondrous personage is as follows : “ Melchisedek having neither beginning of days nor end of life mentioned in Scripture ; but being in that respect as if he were immortal, and therein made like unto the Son of God, who existed before all worlds,* he remaineth a priest for ever.” The remoteness and conciseness of the history not supplying any genealogy of his earthly parentage, we must remain ignorant on that point. Of his rank and character we are pretty fully informed. For, first, his name was Melchisedek, which, being interpreted, signifies that he is King of Righteousness, or a most righteous sovereign. Josephus tells us “ that the king of Solyma was called Melchisedek, (which is as much as to say, the Just King,) for in truth he was no less. And then his title, taken from the place where he resided and ruled, is King of Salem, that is, King of Peace ; for it is

* Having recognized this truth, it is much to be regretted that the Doctor should seek to explain away a fact he had thus tacitly acknowledged.

well known that Salem, in the Hebrew tongue, is peace, as Melech is king, and isedec, righteousness.* And in these particulars he illustriously typified the great heavenly King of Righteousness, the mighty King of kings and Lord of lords. For King of Righteousness, King of Peace, and a Just King, are the express titles which distinguish Christ. And he is also denominated Priest of the Most High God; and as Aaron never had this appellation affixed to him, which he would have had, if Melchisedek had not been a priest of the most high God in a sense entirely different to that in which Aaron was ordained to minister to God, (though he likewise, in various particulars, was an illustrious type of Christ,) we may presume that Melchisedek had ministered unto God, in his sanctum sanctorum, before he came on earth. And we are indeed expressly told that he is made like unto the Son of God; and like him abides a priest continually. He is therefore again, on this account, an exclusive and most appropriate type of him who on his glorious throne for ever sits, and acts in the joint characters of Priest and King. And that very ancient city Salem, which was afterwards Jerusalem, and over which Melchisedek, in justice, peace, and righteousness, reigned upon earth, is always represented in the sacred volume, and allowed to be, a type of the heavenly Jerusalem, over which our blessed Lord will reign in peace and equity and righteousness, for ever and for ever.

Now, such a being as Melchisedek, at the early

* Doddridge.

period he appeared on earth, must have been highly beneficial to the interest of religion; and as he was not only king but priest, we may feel assured that such a personage ministered in that character to the glory of God and the advantage of mankind. And that these most momentous objects were effected by Melchisedek, concise as is the history, does very plainly appear. Immediately subsequent to the fall of man, the everlasting gospel was preached unto Eve; the everlasting gospel was preached unto Abraham,—“In thee shall all nations be blessed.” (Gal. iii. 8.) Subsequent to this promise being made to Abraham, Melchisedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, met him returning from the slaughter of the kings and deliverance of Lot, and brought forth bread and wine. Whether this bread and wine were designed to typify Christ’s sacred body broken and sacred blood effused, and accompanied by sacramental influence, we cannot ascertain. The recital only adds, that it was administered by the priest of the God most high; that after participation “he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.” The reason of this heavenly benediction being thus pronounced on Abraham, is given by St. Paul—“He blessed him who had the promises.” (Abraham rejoiced to see Christ’s day, and he saw it and was glad. John viii. 56.) We may hence be led to suspect that Melchisedek himself was a preacher of the

gospel, which we know was preached to Abraham, as, according to Josephus, he also was of the religion which typified the gospel. His relation is as follows: "Melchisedek was held worthy, by reason of his justice, in all men's opinions, to sacrifice as the priest of the most high God. This Melchisedek friendly entertained Abraham and all his followers, not suffering them to want any thing that was fit for their sustenance. He feasted them at his own table, highly praised him, and rendered public thanks to the great God for that He had vouchsafed to grant him victory."

Whether the probation of this celestial personage terminated by the death of his human nature, as the history is silent on this point, cannot be ascertained. Previous to the appearance of Melchisedek on earth, Enoch, we know, was translated into paradise without dying; and Melchisedek, who, from the relation, seems to have passed his probation on our globe, with glory, safety, and honour, may most probably have been in like manner received in the secondary heavens. One thing is certain, that the human nature of Christ alone has been admitted into the holiest of holies; and the human nature of Melchisedek would doubtless be, as was the prophet Elijah's, spiritualised and glorified in the paradisaic regions.

CHAPTER X.

THE preceding pages having now, we conceive, clearly ascertained the rank of the illustrious Being who propitiates for our sins, and also the universal influence of the propitiation procured through Christ's merits, we proceed most particularly to inquire why Christ must needs have suffered, (Acts xvii. 3,) and on what account his sufferings were so acceptable to God. Some premising observations, involved in this subject, are, however, here essential to be stated.

We have already found reason and Scripture uniting to prove the necessity of probationary states; that if virtue were not tested, intellectual beings would be mere machines; and that a felicity worthy of Deity to bestow, or intelligence to receive, cannot exist without the existence of evil. On the indispensable necessity of evil for the production of probationary states, we have had in the preceding pages frequent occasion to descant; and the liability of evil unto which the Scripture, we conceive, clearly describes even the ever-blessed Trinity as exposing its glorious self, elicits this necessity into fullest demonstra-

tion. For when in counsel of the eternal Three, the triune Godhead ordained all intelligents to encounter the liability of evil, the Trinity did at the same time expose its benignant self unto the liability of evil. Evil depending on the precarious wills of those myriads of intelligents, who have, do now, and will for ever, occupy the boundless universe, all these have been endued by their almighty Former with strength to stand, though with wills free to fall. And in the event of even one recoverable failure, the Reconciler was ordained, God's own beloved Son; his sufferings then became a pledged imperious duty; a duty imposing no less a duty on the second glorious person in the blessed Trinity, than quitting his Father's bosom, and descending from the height of bliss down to the lowest depth of woe. And can we suppose that the paternal Deity, the God who is love, endured himself no pang when He spared not his only-begotten Son, but delivered him up to suffer unparalleled sorrow? We do not suppose that Abraham, when prefiguring the paternal Deity, he stretched out his arm to slay his beloved Son, endured himself no pang; much less the Fount of pity. Where would be the sounding of his bowels, and of his mercies towards his beloved Son? for doubtless He is his Father. (Isa. lxiii. 15, 16.) Besides, this is the very proof propounded in the Scripture, whereby to prove God's tender love towards us. "For herein was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." And if we can

suppose this sacrifice cost the Fount of Love no anguish, where was the proof which the beloved apostle asserts to have been demonstrated by the sacrifice Love made of his beloved Son? The inference which God himself deduced from Abraham's obedience was, "Now I know thou fearest me, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." (Gen. xxii. 12.) The inference Scripture deduces from God's delivering up his only-begotten Son is, Now we know God loveth us, seeing He has not withheld his only Son from us, and with him will He not also freely give us all things? Our blessed Lord himself declares, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." And the vexed spirit participates the sorrow. (Isa. lxiii. 10.) He intercedeth with unutterable groanings. (Rom. viii. 26.)

The evils to which the blessed Trinity did thus expose itself, and actually endure, does, we conceive, fully illustrate the justness of the premised assertion, by incontestably demonstrating the necessity of evil. For the Father spared not; the Son suffered; the sympathizing Spirit endured unutterable anguish; and the endurance of these evils was purposed coeval with the eternity of God; for we are expressly told that the purpose which God purposed in himself in Jesus Christ our Lord, was an eternal purpose. The trials, therefore, to which the blessed Trinity did thus expose itself may be justly said to constitute an eternal probation; a probation without beginning, the termination of which was not (according to

the good pleasure of God) purposed to be ended until the dispensation of the fulness of creations; a probation which did not receive its final consummation until the second glorious Person in the blessed Trinity proclaimed, as he hung distended on the cross, "It is finished—bowed his head, and yielded up the ghost;" till the things concerning Christ were thus brought unto their end; (Luke xxii. 37;) until Christ had entered into his rest, and had ceased from his own works, as God did from his; (Heb. iv. 10;)—there is reason to believe that even the glorious Godhead was not enthroned in that plenitude of bliss wherein it now, in the fulness of felicity, is seated on the glorious mercy-seat, to live, and rule, and reign one God for evermore. For though the glory which the Son had with the Father before the visible creation was called into existence (John xvii. 5) was doubtless great, surpassing man's conception, yet from our blessed Lord, during his sojourn on our earth, there fell some declarations which plainly showed that even the bliss of Godhead admitted augmentation:—"I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The certainty of our own sufferings at the hour of dissolution, though it does not destroy, is yet unquestionably a diminution of, our present happi-

ness. “Through fear of death we are all our lifetime subject unto bondage;”* nor shall we ever be possessed of permanent felicity, till the gloomy vale has been explored, which leadeth unto life; so also it appeareth with the blessed Lord of life; “he drank of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up his head.” (Psal. cx. 7.) “For the joy set forth before him, he did endure the cross, despising the shame.” The stone God lays in Zion is a tried foundation, and He who lays it is a tried God. (Isaiah xxviii. 16.)

From the foregoing scriptures there also certainly arises much reason to believe that even the felicity of Deity could not have been superlative if it had shrunk from trials; and the sacred pages uniformly and expressly ascribe the transcendent exaltation of the blessed Son of God to his victory over trials: “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things

* It might be said that Christ having descended from heaven, he was certain of ascending there; and that therefore our deaths differ widely from his. But if we firmly believe this, we cannot doubt his power and promise to “save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him.”

under the earth; and that every tongue should confess," throughout the boundless universe, "that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 6—11.)

The felicity of Deity unquestionably consists in imparting felicity; and as the liability of evil was essential for the production of probationary states, and probationary states for the production of supreme felicity—for untested virtue could not be fitted for the joys God hath prepared for it—had not the liability of evil been by God ordained, the whole intelligent creation had been consigned unto a negative happiness. As the Omniscient Mind ordained itself to participate this liability, we must conclude that the most indispensable essentiality existed for this participation; and victory over trials being the basis on which is built the bliss of all subordinate intelligents, it is reasonable to infer that the infinite benignity of the Divinity derived extreme felicity from the ordination of these trials, even though it was itself involved in participation of them; consequently causing a subtraction, previous to their final consummation, from superlative felicity. And we may also with certainty conclude, that subsequent to the triumphant moment of their glorious termination on the cross of Christ, the felicity of Deity was rendered transcendent, and infinitely perfect, through the having ordained trials for intellectual beings; that being the foundation-stone on which alone can be erected the superstructure of their everlasting bliss. Fallen natures, we have already seen, could not

be restored to the favour of a pure and jealous God, till God was glorified by the delineation of perfection, in a nature as degraded as had ever fallen.

A celestial being greatly subordinate to the second glorious person in the blessed Trinity, might, doubtless, have been endued with strength and power by God for the achievement of this purpose. But had it been imposed on any being subordinate to Deity, where was the proof of God's tender love to probationaries? How could the countless myriads of probationaries, who fill infinite space, and whom, according to the eternal purpose of almighty God, He purposes to gather together in one, in Christ, have been assured, as they are now assured, of the imperious necessity of their passing through those states, and of the imperious necessity of the liability of evil to constitute those states, had not the Trinity itself exposed itself unto the liability of evil? The Godhead had imposed grievous and heavy burdens, arduous and painful duties, on beings subordinate to itself; whilst the eternal Three, wrapt and enthroned in bliss, touched not the burdens even with their finger. But far different was the conduct of the adored Trinity; for in all the afflictions of intelligent probationaries the Godhead was afflicted. The glorious Godhead did not impotently lay help upon subordinate beings; the Godhead laid help upon one that is mighty; the Godhead laid help upon Omnipotence; the Godhead laid help upon its glorious self,—“I, even I, am he, that for mine own sake blotteth

out transgressions ;” the Trinity’s own arm hath brought salvation to him. (Isa. lxiii. 5.) “ We know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.” (2 Cor. viii. 9.) And let us consider, whether any being subordinate to Deity could have fulfilled the eternal purpose of the eternal God.

The preceding observations have, we conceive, very clearly proved, that if the great work of redemption had not been achieved by the Almighty Son of God, the necessity for evil could not have been demonstrated as it is now demonstrated ; and the most tender proof of the universal Father’s love for his intellectual offspring, had not been manifested, as it is now made manifest to all.

Mr. Locke very wisely remarks, that “ It is enough to justify the fitness of any thing to be done, by resolving it into the wisdom of God who has done it : that we know little of this visible, and nothing at all of the state of that intellectual, world, wherein are infinite numbers” and degrees of spirits, out of the reach of our ken or guess ; and therefore know not what transactions there were between God and our Saviour, in reference to his kingdom, or what need there was to set up a head and a chieftain in opposition to the prince of this world, the prince of the power of the air, &c. whereof there are more than obscure intimations in Scripture. And unassisted reason, when reflecting on the infinite perfections of the Father of all lights, and the infinite infinitude of all his operations, powerfully suggests that the exem-

plification of evil by the revolt in heaven, would produce an indispensable necessity for the great Head and Chieftain who opposed the power of darkness, and who we know was Christ, to glorify the Deity, by delineating, in opposition unto evil, as thus exemplified by the apostate angels, not only a pattern and example of perfect moral good, but of infinite perfection; such exemplification being most commensurate with the infinite perfections of the paternal Deity, and the infinite infinitude of all his other operations. And furthermore, that infinite perfection was most fitting, if not alone (consistent with the honour of the Deity) fit to approach unto and mediate with infinite perfection; and that by the delineation of infinite perfection there would be once and for ever a provision made to reach the case of all who ever have, do now, or can or will for ever need an interest in its propitiatory merits.

In the prophecy of Isaiah, the Deity is described (He having created all things perfect) as looking for one to help, and wondering that there was none to uphold; and therefore we are told it was, that his own arm brought salvation to him. And in the book of the Revelations it is thus recorded, “ And round about the throne were four-and-twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four-and-twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne were four beasts, (four high intelligents, of the most transcendent order,) full of eyes before and behind. And the four beasts, and the

four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

Though this sublime description conveys the most exalted ideas of the transcendent glory of these wonderful intelligents, and highly dignified eternal orders of celestial beings, by describing them as not only stationed, but seated round about the glorious throne of God—and of their purity and greatness, (for they were clothed in white raiment, and crowned with crowns of gold,) there can exist no doubt,—yet still we find even these most illustrious intellectuals ascribing their glorious elevation to the propitiation wrought through the Redeemer's merits; and if such high intelligents, such high eternal orders of celestial beings require an interest in the Redeemer's merits;—if high angelic hierarchs are charged by God with folly; if even all of these, in passing their appointed trials, have contracted some slight specks, some slight degree of imperfection, alone discoverable to the scrutinizing eyes of him in whose sight the heavens are not clean—alone discoverable to the infinitely pure eyes of infinite perfection, before whom these glorious sanctities cast down their crowns in deep humiliation;—how infinitely perfect must needs be the perfection of the great Atoner who propitiates for these—how infinitely pure and perfect must that pure and perfect being be, who could not be approached but through such propitiation!

Now these suggestions and scriptural communications all tend to prove an existing essentiality for the delineation of infinite perfection ; and if such essentiality did actually exist, it is self-evident, that nothing short of Deity could delineate the same ; for nothing short of infinite perfection could delineate and exemplify infinite perfection. And that this indispensable essentiality did exist, is clearly demonstrated by God's infinite and eternal purpose, which He purposed in himself, namely, the gathering together in one all things in Christ. This very plainly proves the existing indispensable essentiality for the delineation of infinite perfection, in the dread event of exemplified evil ; and that such delineation was involved and comprised in the infinite and eternal purpose of the infinite God.

Again, we find this truth confirmed in the Apocalypse of St. John, wherein it is recorded, that a strong mighty angel challenged the whole universe of God to produce a being worthy to approach omnipotence, and none therein was found except the slaughtered Lamb. St. Paul records, that verily Christ took not on him the nature of angels ; clearly intimating the existing necessity for the delineation of infinite perfection in some nature ; though at the same time immediately accounting why Christ could not, in angelic nature, delineate the same. He was made, says this great apostle, a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death. Infinite perfection, or the highest degree of possible virtue, it is very evident, could not be illustrated without

the endurance of every sufferance, and the overcoming of every trial to which the lowest order of probationary beings in the boundless universe ever was, is now, or ever will be, rendered liable. Nor could infinite perfection be demonstrated, without the endurance of the highest degree of possible evil; and this could alone be effected by an union of the highest to the lowest nature. The highest degree of possible evil could alone be endured by him, who was in possession of the highest degree of possible good. For the transition from the extremest height of bliss down to the extremest depth of woe, produced that infinite contrast which produced the endurance of the highest degree of possible evil, without which infinite perfection could not be demonstrated; therefore, nothing short of Deity could have infinitely fulfilled the eternal purpose of the infinite God. Had a possibility remained for probationary beings to have overcome a trial, Christ had not overcome—a possibility had been left to have excelled him in virtue; but by the infinite Son of God enduring with unblemished righteousness the highest degree of possible evil unto which probationary beings have ever been, are now, or will ever be liable, this is for once and for ever rendered impossible.

The assertions of St. Paul fully illustrate the justness of this reasoning; he, after sublimely describing the transcendent glory, greatness, and dignity of the infinite Son of God, proclaims the indispensable essentiality of an union of the highest to the lowest nature, as well as of the suffer-

ings of Christ. He, who is the beginning, says the apostle, is the first-born from the dead : sub-joining at the same time an additional reason for this wondrous union, as well as for the sufferings of Christ, to those we have already stated, namely, that in all things the glorious Son of God might have pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should dwell all fulness of perfection ; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, (which, without the endurance of, He could not have been infinitely perfect,) by him to reconcile all intellectuals throughout the boundless universe unto his infinitely perfect self ; no man or other being may therefore redeem their fellows, for it cost more to redeem their souls ; so that they must let that alone for ever. (Ps. xlix. 8.) That a redemption reaching the case of every intellectual throughout the boundless universe who needed such redemption—a redemption commensurate with the infinite purpose and the infinite perfection of him who purposed, and of him who wrought it—a redemption embracing no less a grasp than that of gathering together in one all things both in heaven and in earth,—could not be obtained by any thing short of the delineation of infinite perfection, the Scripture still further proves. St. Paul thus argues : If therefore perfection were obtainable by the Levitical priesthood, what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedek ? and the redemption in Christ Jesus is declared to be obtained through the righteousness of Christ. It is his righteous-

ness which God sets forth to be a propitiation for the remission of sins, (Rom. iii. 25;) and the sole intent of the Mosaic institution seems comprised in one point, namely, to pre-show that nothing short of unblemished righteousness, nothing short of spotless perfection, nothing short of perfect holiness, could or will be received and accepted by a pure and spotless God. And neither perfection, nor righteousness, nor perfect holiness, could have been fully demonstrated without the endurance of sufferings: for had not the great Captain of salvation been tempted in all points like to probationaries, it was impossible that He could have demonstrated infinite perfection; and it was impossible for him to be tempted in all points like to probationaries, and overcome every temptation by which they had been overcome, without the endurance of every suffering to which the lowest order of probationary beings in the boundless universe was ever liable. Had He not to the uttermost endured all of these, his perfection would have been a negative perfection, not an infinite perfection. For the perfection unto which intelligents attain, depends upon the trials wherewith their virtue has been tested, and the difficulty and extent of the duties they have been ordained to perform. Probationaries who have not been appointed to cope with very arduous trials, or to perform very arduous duties, may delineate perfection in the state in which it has pleased God to place them. But their perfection shrinks into nothing when compared with the perfection of probationaries who have fulfilled

extreme and difficult duties, and sustained severe and arduous sufferings without tarnishing their virtue. Besides, had not the great Captain of salvation been tempted in all points like to probationaries,* these could not have had an high

* It appears highly probable, that the illustrious personage Melchisedek did pass through his probation on our earth with safety and with honour; and may on that account be said to have in our nature delineated perfection, which St. Paul seems to intimate by the following question: If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedek? And should Melchisedek, as man, have delineated perfection, it may here be asked, why could not such delineation atone for man's transgression? To this we first reply, that if heaven's highest sanctities require an interest in the Redeemer's merits, and Melchisedek contracted during his warfare in our nature any speck or spot, he would himself need both with them and us to participate the benefit of Christ's propitiation. He certainly took on him, as did the Son of God, a frail, polluted nature; and may not have fulfilled the task of perfectly restoring it unto its pristine perfection. St. Paul concludes all under sin who ever lived on earth, saving our blessed Lord; asserting that all have fallen short of the glory of God. It is possible, however, that Melchisedek may have been an exception to this assertion; he being a man totally differently circumstanced to all other men except the Son of God; he being pre-existent, and, like unto our Lord, composed of a celestial and a carnal nature. He may therefore, as man, have delineated perfection in the state in which it pleased God for him to pass through his probation;—and was this the fact, he in this respect, as well as many others, was an illustrious type of the glorious Son of God. And both the Jewish and scriptural relations of the titles and character of this extraordinary personage (already inserted) clearly favour this conjecture. But even if he did delineate perfection in the state in which it pleased God to place him, how widely different was the state to that in which our blessed Lord

priest who was touched with the feeling of infirmities, or the glorious pattern set, which now is

passed through his warfare on our earth. The state of Melchisedek was far from being a state which exposed him to every temptation incidental to humanity, and which, without the endurance of it in its most extreme extent, we have already seen, he could not as man have delineated full perfection. Melchisedek was a king, a rich, munificent monarch; according to Josephus, highly respected and esteemed among men; and according to St. Paul, the greatest among men. He was greater than was the great patriarch Abraham; for without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better. And that it is important for us to form just ideas of the greatness of this man, is fully illustrated by the apostolic admonition—Consider how great this man was. The Son of God, on the contrary, took on him the form of a servant, was poor, not knowing where to lay his head—despised, derided, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Melchisedek was probably translated back to the celestial regions; at least, there is no reason in the world to suppose that he endured the sufferings which did our blessed Lord; as neither the sacred nor Jewish historians mention such a circumstance. But the blessed Son of God poured out his soul in death under the most excruciating tortures. Melchisedek could not therefore have been tempted in all points unto which man was liable; and his perfection consequently was a negative perfection, falling far short of, and entirely subordinate unto, the full perfection which the glorious Son of God did, as man, delineate on earth, and without which propitiation could not have been made for man's abundant errors. The perfection of Melchisedek could not, we thus perceive, have atoned for mankind, or probably for many other orders of probationaries; and both as an heavenly and a human being, it appears most likely that he did himself require an interest in the infinite merits of our blessed Redeemer: for nothing short of infinite perfection could reach the case of all, and pen within one fold all things both in heaven and in earth. It has been already observed, that it is most reasonable to conclude, that the trials of intelligents are administered during their

fully set, of overcoming these. It was therefore, as St. Paul well observes, an act highly be-
pristine state, except in the case of beings of the Melchisedekian order. Eternal beings, who have no beginning of days, must pass through their probation at whatever period of their existence Omniscience sees most fitting: and this circumstance, with others, must produce an existing similarity between their trials and those of the eternal Son of God. All beings of this order must be pre-informed of the appointed task they are ordained during some period of their existence to perform; and hold themselves in readiness to fulfil it at whatever epoch Almighty God appoints, though of the determined period they are probably uninformed; as they probably also are of the extent of the trials they are doomed to endure; which circumstances must render their trials infinitely subordinate to those of the Trinity; for Omniscience must from all eternity with certainty have known, in the dread event of exemplified evil, the full extent of sufferings it was pledged to endure. The pre knowledge of impending trials, though ignorant of their extent, and of the time when they are ordained to occur, must, however, render the probation of eternal beings far more difficult and arduous, than that of those who have passed it in their primeval state, but wisely proportioned to the strength and powers of this most illustrious order; though at the same time infinitely subordinate to the trials which the Trinity purposed in itself in Jesus Christ our Lord. The trial of eternal beings also in another instance resembles those of Christ; they like him descend from realms of light and bliss to scenes of death and woe, (at least, in the two instances of this kind that occurred on our earth,) an arduous dread transition, rendering also their trials upon this account more poignant than can ever happen unto beings who have undergone them in their primeval state. And though Melchisedek passed his probation on our earth under very widely different circumstances to those which did our ever blessed Lord, yet it was a probation, and doubtless an arduous one too. He had to struggle with the conflicting inclinations of an heavenly and a corrupted nature; he lived in perilous times—nation warring against nation, and the wickedness of mankind arrived to such

coming him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, in reconciling all things both in heaven and in earth

an height, as to draw down upon the cities of the plain God's special and heaviest judgments. In the midst of this crooked and depraved generation, Melchisedek did reign king of righteousness, king of peace; and, according to Josephus, worthy the title which was conferred upon him, namely, the Just King. Now, a righteous, peaceful, and just monarch, it cannot be supposed could religiously and courageously fulfil the duties of his station without opposition from a perverse and wicked world; the truth of which observation the history does, we think, very fully confirm; for we find this Melchisedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, meeting and blessing Abraham returning from the slaughter of the Pagan kings, (Heb. viii.), boldly stepping forth in defence of the true religion; whose rites, we find from Josephus, he celebrated, and of which he was a professor. This historian further states, that Melchisedek not only friendly feasted Abraham at his own table, but also highly praised him, and rendered public thanks to the great God for that He had vouchsafed to grant him victory over his wicked enemies. And this was alone an act sufficient to show that he lived, ruled, reigned, and ministered for God, above the fear of men; consequently must have exposed himself to injury from a depraved and evil world. And in addition to the high offices of king and priest, he was likewise a prophet; for "he blessed him who had the promises."

We trust this inquiry will not be attributed to vain curiosity; for it has been entered into and inserted here, as supplying additional proofs, not only of the eternal existence of the great I AM, but also of the infinite benignity of the divine nature, which has ever demonstrated itself by exercising his creative power, doubtless for the purpose of disseminating happiness and imparting good; likewise because it still further manifests the necessity of trials for effecting the same. Momentous truths for us to contemplate on. Let us therefore attend to the advice of the great apostle—and "consider how great a man Melchisedek was."

unto his perfect self, to make the glorious Captain of their great salvation perfect through sufferings. And this we know the Almighty Father did ; for though Christ was a Son, yet it pleased the Father to bruise him, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered ; and being made perfect, infinitely perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him ; called of God an high priest forever after the eternal order of Melchisedek. Comprised also in the eternal purpose of Almighty God which He purposed in himself in Jesus Christ our Lord, was the spoliation of the power of darkness. The infernal leader of these impious hierarchs had been opposed, and his impious impotence exposed in heaven by his high compeer Michael the prince of angels. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon ; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not. But Satan had not only waged war in heaven, but sowed tares on earth, in direct and impious opposition unto him, who had sowed it with good seed ; and there is much reason to conclude, committed far more extensive depredations. These loudly called for Jehovah's own sore, strong, and mighty sword, to punish the crooked, piercing serpent. (Isaiah.) For though a being, subordinate to Almighty God's own Son, had been ordained to hurl him down from heaven, yet in a future contest with the great leviathan, this arch-angelic victor appeals unto the Lord, and prayed that He would himself rebuke the devil. (Jude 9.) He had opposed Omnipotence, and Omnipotence himself, with his

own arm, has brought salvation to him. And how did it please Omnipotence to achieve this vast exploit? He doubtless might have instantly consumed him with the spirit of his mouth, and destroyed him with the brightness of his coming. (2 Thess. ii. 8.) But had God thus ordained what triumph had been obtained by such a victory? But far different was the purpose of Omniscience, which He purposed in Christ; and though it is enough for us to know that the purposes of Omniscience are ever purposed in consummate wisdom—that the purposes of him who made the earth by his power, hath established it by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his discretion, (Jer. x. 12,) are ever perfect, wisest, best,—yet our finite understandings may plainly here perceive the excellence of counsel which purposed this purpose. For how could Omnipotence so gloriously demonstrate the power of light over darkness, and the impious impotence of the infernal potentate, as by facing himself his heaviest battery—as by himself sustaining and defeating the utmost fury of its fierce attack?

Of the devices of the infernal foe we are not ignorant; his weapons of assault we too well know are baits to seduce, or terrors to affright probationary beings from out the path of duty. The first of these had been indignantly repulsed by our victorious Lord; but had he not sustained and completely triumphed over a conflict with the latter, what victory had been gained? and how could Omnipotence so gloriously demonstrate to the beholding universe, the impious impotence

of the wily potentate, as by sustaining his assault and defeating his attack, in a poor, frail, polluted nature, he had himself degraded; as by illustrating in this the perfect victory of virtue over every trial, that could possibly assail it? Thus to defeat him, was a work well worthy of omnipotence. Omnipotence itself it was that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the deadly dragon. (Isa. li. 9.) And the weaker was the instrument with which He fought the dragon, the more illustrious was the glorious victory. The weakness of the instrument animated the hopes of the infernal chieftain, completed his delusion, and the Redeemer's triumph. The wicked one is snared in the work of his own hands. God chooses foolish things to confound the wise, weak things to confound the mighty, base things and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. The serpent's head was broke, though the victor's heel was bruised; it was through death that the Almighty Son of God destroyed him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Had not the great celestial champion vanquished the dragon, in the hour God gave the power of darkness wherein to do its worst, the battle of the Lord Jehovah had been lost, not won.

But when we fix our admiring eyes upon the cross of Christ, we there behold a constellation of all virtues, a complication of all woes;* we there behold stretched out in agony, a frail enfeebled nature, over whom the wily, wicked

* This assertion will be fully proved hereafter.

chieftain had obtained the most signal and deplorable successes, evincing a perfect purification from all moral taint; and in its humiliated, tortured, and degraded state, gloriously re-assuming its pristine majesty, wading victorious through this sea of sorrows, and emerging thence, arrayed in brightest glory of transcendent virtue—each piercing trial serving but to irradiate the refulgent lustre, each pointed thorn enwreathing laurels round the victor's head, and all the artillery of the enraged foe employed to maintain his conquest, inverting its own aim, by obtaining universal redemption for all intelligents; thereby effecting (as has been already explained) the utter spoliation of the infernal hierarchs, whose impious impotence the glorious victor openly exposed unto the beholding universe, triumphing over them in it. And on the third day subsequent to his cruel crucifixion, He triumphed over the grave by his glorious resurrection.

The accuser can now no longer boast, that he can by his terrors affright God's offspring into disobedience: the death of Christ exhibits an eternal monument of his impotence; the life of Jesus exhibited an universal resistance to all his machinations:* the weakest probationaries, though

* We hope our readers will excuse the repetition of the foregoing statements, and the tautology which marks this last research. It has been caused by the frequent necessity of inserting incidental observations on the subject of it, on which we were obliged to touch in former parts of this work; and our now wishing to collect every argument involved in this most momentous subject in one point, for the better understanding of its several parts.

ordained to wrestle with principalities, with powers, with spiritual wickedness, yet need not fear the issue—their subtle chieftain is a vanquished foe; they fight against him under the banner of a victorious leader, who has completely crushed his power; and this mighty Captain of their great salvation, in that He himself has suffered, being tempted, (Heb. ii.) is able to succour them that are tempted; He will make them more than conquerors, and save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him.

We next come to consider why Christ must needs have suffered, on an account more levelled to the comprehension of our present understandings, than the accounts already stated; for our nature having been the nature chosen by infinite wisdom for the fulfilment of his purpose, it is immediately apparent, that, as man, Christ could not possibly delineate perfection, had He not endured death. If a triumph over the last and greatest enemy which man is doomed to conquer had not been obtained by our great Lord and Master, He could not have been tempted in all points like to what we have been; He could not have been experimentally enabled, as He is now enabled, to succour us in the last trying conflict with him who has the power of death. But by the death of Christ is brought to pass the saying that is written, (Isa. xxv. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 34,) “Death is swallowed up in victory; O death, where is now thy sting? O grave, where is now thy victory? The sting of death is sin,” but the sting is now destroyed; for the infinite merits of

the glorious Saviour propitiates for all sin. Thanks therefore be, thanks, fervent thanks unto our gracious God, which giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.

It has been, we conceive, clearly and satisfactorily proved, that the blessed Redeemer could not demonstrate infinite perfection without the endurance of every sufferance to which the lowest probationary in the boundless universe ever had, is now, or will ever be, liable. The sufferance of death was therefore rendered indispensably imperious; death may have passed on many orders of probationary beings; but be that as it may, death has been passed on us; and it was on this very account, it was for the suffering of death, we are expressly told, our nature was selected. It was for the suffering of death that Christ assumed our nature, and was made a little lower than the angels. Had Christ delineated perfection in angelic nature, He could not have endured this species of temptation; for angels, we know, are spirits, and are not enveloped in a carnal nature; He therefore could not have endured those acute corporeal sufferings, unto which those who have been formed after the law of a carnal commandment have been rendered liable; neither could man, or probably many other probationaries, (should many in the boundless universe exist, as degraded as ourselves,) have reaped the benefit of his merits. For had not the great heavenly Victor overcome every trial by which the lowest order of probationary beings had ever been overcome, we must repeat, his

merits would not have reached the case of all erring probationaries: and He could not have proved victor over every trial, had He not endured death, as probationary beings are ordained to endure it; nor as man, could he possibly have delineated perfection, had he not endured it. “We therefore see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For as much, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, (as there do exist probationary children, made after the law of a carnal commandment,) He also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: for verily, He took not on him the nature of angels, but He took on him the seed of Abraham; wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people.”

It is likewise evident, that Christ could not, as man, have demonstrated full perfection, had He not triumphed over death, under circumstances the most appalling incidental to humanity—under circumstances the most humiliating and ignominious—under the endurance of trials and tortures the most excruciating. Natural evil unquestionably is the offspring of moral evil: previous to the exemplification of the second, we never hear of the exemplification of the first.

Natural evil is at once the offspring of moral evil, and often operates both as its preventive and cure. The greatness and extremity of corporeal or natural evil, unto which probationary beings are become obnoxious, is probably proportioned unto the degree and extremity of moral evil with which their nature is become infected. This is proved by the utmost extent of corporeal sufferings, and even the certainty of death itself, being often found insufficient to prevent the committal of the atrocious crimes which pride, revenge, cruelty, malice, hatred, and avarice, prompt man to perpetrate; a fact historic pages too abundantly confirm.

But whatever sufferings are inflicted upon man, whether they are sent from the immediate hand of our blessed heavenly Father, or by the hand of man, in hope of reclaiming offenders, or deterring others from crime, by the example made of them; or are permitted to befall them, through the malign interference of their inveterate foe and his agents, wicked men; yet we are assured that no event can molest us but such as are inevitably incidental unto states of trial, or have been ordained to constitute these states; that no temptation can or will overtake us but such as is common to man; and let what will befall us, man cannot now complain; "for God spared not his only-begotten Son, but gave him up to suffer," in its extremest degree, every evil unto which man is liable. Had he not done this unto the uttermost, many among our feeble race would have manifested virtues which Christ did not demon-

strate. We read of worthies even under the ancient dispensation, who by wicked men were tortured, not accepting of deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonments: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder; were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, (of whom the world was not worthy.) And under the gospel dispensation the sufferings of its early converts are too notorious to require particularizing here. Had not therefore the great Founder of Christianity himself headed the noble army of martyrs who yielded up their lives amidst the most excruciating tortures, in attestation of its truth—had He not himself, under the most excruciating tortures the power of darkness could devise, borne witness unto the truth of his assertions, he would have imposed on his feeble followers sufferings hard to be borne, which He touched not even with his finger, and would have been excelled in virtue by weak probationaries.

But by the sufferings of Christ and his primitive disciples, we have not only a powerful attestation to the truth of his religion, but we can with certainty infer that every trial we sustain, every suffering we endure, are working for our good; and if we suffer rather than sin, we may be assured that we ultimately shall have abundant cause to say that it is good for us that we have been afflicted. And to this blessed end, “let us

lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin; and ye have forgotten the exhortation, which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that

which is lame be turned out of the way ; but let it rather be healed." (Heb. xii.)

By the victory of Christ we are assured of the power of light over darkness ; that hellish fiends are held in chains, and high over all Jehovah reigns Lord God omnipotent. And this God has pledged his own fidelity that He will suffer no man to be tempted above what he is able to bear ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that he may be able to sustain it. (1 Cor. x. 13. Our blessed Lord does not deceive the world, but declares that in it we shall have tribulation. A truth which those who believe, and those who do not believe in Christianity cannot but acknowledge. Philosophy cannot prevent our falling into temptation, or deliver us from evil ; and we know nothing short of Christianity that can fully support us under it. Its glorious Founder has completely and triumphantly overcome evil by good ; and doubtless enjoins all intelligences throughout the intellectual system of the boundless universe to follow his example. " I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True ; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire"—piercing and irresistible as is that element—"and on his head were many crowns ; for he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords ; and he had a name written," that none could know but he himself. None knows the nature and perfections of Omniscience saving Omniscience ; none knows the Son, saving

the Father only. “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood.” His glorified and spiritualized humanity bore the outward and everlasting insignia of the means by which he had obtained his glorious victory. “And his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.” These mighty armies all followed after the one celestial Leader, who fought and won the Lord Jehovah’s battle— (“for of the people there was none with him”)—who spoiled the power of darkness, and through the blood of his cross demonstrated perfection, under the most humiliating and distressing circumstances to which the lowest probationaries are ever liable; without which these could not have partaken the benefit of his propitiation. “Without shedding of blood” for these, “there could be no remission;” without shedding of blood, his merits had not been infinite, or reached the case of heaven’s illustrious sanctities. But the glorious brightness of his infinite righteousness out-dazzles every speck, eclipses every stain. “Through death he destroyed him who has the power of death; through the blood of his cross he reconcileth all things unto God.”

That an indispensable requisition did exist for the Creator’s glory to be fully vindicated by virtue vanquishing every difficulty with which it was destined to struggle, we consider an irrefragable position; it must therefore have been as essential to the completion of God’s purpose, that the great vindicator of his Father’s honour should

cope with internal as with external trials : a conclusion which Scripture does abundantly confirm, by asserting that the glorious Son of God took on him our infirmities—was ordained to “ save unto the uttermost,” and must consequently have been tried to the uttermost ; and therefore must necessarily have taken on him our infirmities in their most extreme degree : a conclusion also fully supported by the word of God, which expressly states that Christ not only took on him our infirmities, but that he was compassed by infirmities. Now if an exquisite sensibility to the impressions of fear may be justly classed among the number of our infirmities ; and if frequent deviations from the path of duty and of virtue have been made through an excess of this violent and depressing passion, we must conclude that the great Victor was bound to combat with this impediment to virtue in its full extent, and that the most excessive degree of this natural weakness had been implanted in the human body prepared by God for the fulfilment of his purpose. For had not this been the case, He could not have with truth been said to have been tempted in all points unto which man was liable. Which assertion also proves that our blessed Redeemer was ordained to struggle with further difficulties, and share the sufferings of our frail humanity ; and that He did do so, we are distinctly told ; for He not only took on him our infirmities, but bare our sicknesses.

We all well know, that during the period mind and body are appointed to act in mutual contact

with each other, sufferings of the mind often affect the body, and that sufferings of the body, (particularly debility, exhaustion, or any other malady which shakes the nervous system and enfeebles the human frame,) often affect the mind; and that the mind of man is frequently enfeebled and depressed through these physical causes. Now, the vicissitudes to which the Son of God was continually exposed were eminently calculated to injure and debilitate the human frame with which He was invested. When man has been long enured to hardships, by having endured a continual series of them, he may become so far habituated to a deprivation of comforts as to feel tolerably easy under the loss of them. But that insensibility which is acquired by habit could not have contributed its powerful influence in rendering the human nature assumed by our blessed Saviour, totally indifferent to the conveniences of life. His was perpetually diversified by the most widely contrasted situations. Sometimes we find him kindly and hospitably welcomed by friends He loved and valued; at others ostentatiously feasted by the haughty Pharisees; then accepting the most homely fare, and the poor accommodation provided by his humble associates, of one pillow to sleep on in the hinder part of a ship; at other intervals, distressed by hunger, oppressed by weariness, destitute of every comfort, and describing his forlorn situation by a simile that must touch every feeling heart: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but I have not where to lay

my head." At another time the admiring populace are forcibly endeavouring to make him a king; then thrusting him out of their city, and leading him unto the brow of the hill on which it was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

But were we here to follow him through the innumerable vicissitudes by which he was so continually tossed, and which were most of them of a nature common to man, it would lead us into too wide a field; we shall, therefore, only point out one species of misery endured by our blessed Saviour, and which was peculiar to himself. This was his prophetic knowledge of the sufferings that awaited him. The book of fate is kindly shut to us, and if presumptuously, superstitiously, and wickedly, we try to pry into its contents, by application to the wayward tribe who delude the unwary by their false pretences to the knowledge of futurity,—and it suits their subtle purposes to give an unfavourable or alarming answer to these impious interrogatories,—what a foundation for uneasiness (if weakly credited) do such predictions lay, and how justly is this temerity punished by the misery that is oft endured in consequence of it! And when on any reasonable ground we have cause to dread impending danger, though slow in its advances, and still distant from us, what solicitude does it excite, and how injurious does it often prove unto our mortal frame! But no degree of comparison can exist between those threatenings and forebodings that are solaced by supporting hope, which scarce ever totally for-

sakes us in our deepest woe, and that dreadful certainty of sufferings which our blessed Lord was pledged to endure? For, as He himself observed, did He not stand firm in this tremendous contest, how could the Scriptures be fulfilled? how could the power of darkness be utterly destroyed? how could the Creator's honour be gloriously vindicated? and how could the intellectual system throughout the boundless universe be reconciled to God? Awful considerations unto him who was compassed with infirmities, and distressingly assailed with the tormenting passion fear. What perpetual agitation, what acute sensations, must the conflict He through life maintained with this torturing infirmity, have exasperated! When we are destined to combat with this passion, the conflict is generally soon decided, but in the case of our blessed Saviour it must have been perpetually renewed. How harassing were such incessant struggles, and what anxiety must constantly have preyed upon his mind previous to the termination of his irrevocable doom!

These conclusions we have already found the history abundantly propounding, by the declaration of the noble Sufferer: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished! But to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." Now the nature of the vicissitudes we have enumerated, the frequent if not continued perturbations of the Redeemer's mind, the weight and pressure that

hung so heavy on it; “the incessant fatigues attendant on his indefatigable labours; his often travelling several miles on foot when his body had been heated by preaching in the day; his being exposed, under these circumstances, to the copious dews which fall by night in those parts;” * these united causes, with others that might be named, were eminently calculated to debilitate his human frame, “depress his spirits, and impair the tone of his nerves.” † Borne down, oppressed, and almost quite exhausted with these calamities, he probably entered the garden of Gethsemane; when the long-dreaded hour did fast approach that was to decide this wondrous contest, break the serpent’s head, destroy the power of darkness, and dethrone the king of terrors. The recital is as follows: “When Jesus had concluded his fervent prayer to God in behalf of his disciples, he came out and went forth, as he was wont with them, over the brook Cedron, to the mount of Olives, where was a garden, into the which he entered; and his disciples also followed him. Then cometh Jesus with them to a place called Gethsemane; and when he was at the place, he saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, and began to be sorrowful, sore amazed, and very heavy.” Various have been the conjectures respecting the cause of the acute and poignant anguish with which our Lord was seized at this distressing juncture; but we think his

* Doddridge’s Expositor.

† Ibid.

own declaration on entering the garden clearly ascertains this point: "My soul," exclaimed our blessed Saviour, "is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." That the horror and dismay with which He then was seized was principally, if not solely, occasioned by the close approach of the tremendous sufferings on the point of being inflicted on his feeble human frame, is further and fully proved by the following relation:—"Who in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him who was able to save him from death." We thus perceive the object of his fervent supplication was, to be saved from death. It also plainly appears that the torturing conflict he endured from fear of the excruciating death which just awaited him, involved and produced another fear; for it is immediately subjoined, "that he was heard in that he feared." Now, we all well know he was not saved from death, though heard in that he feared. There is therefore good reason to conclude that the fear involved with the fear of death was exasperated by a distrustful, dismaying apprehension, whether the weak feeble nature which now he bore so heavily loaded with infirmities and woes, was equal to the terrific contest in which it was engaging with the combined power of darkness; whether it could wrestle with and stand against all the wiles of the devil; against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places; all up in arms against him. For did it not in this tremendous combat obtain full victory over

these tremendous foes; obtain full victory over every infirmity, and in particular over that distressing passion, fear—did it not demonstrate, in opposition to this passion, magnanimity unparalleled, and perfect lamb-like patience, while enduring the most excruciating torments—did it not evince perfect forgiveness of its barbarous foes under the very tortures they were cruelly inflicting—did it for a moment, while suffering agonies of the body, and the still more poignant agony, agony of mind,* forget the happiness of others,—all had been lost, darkness had triumphed over light, and the intellectual system of the boundless universe had not obtained salvation.

And if sufferings of the mind are still more agonizing than agonies of the body, how terrific were the sufferings which the blessed Son of God was doomed to endure from the causes already stated; from others unto which he was, as the Son of God, exclusively exposed, and which we shall soon have occasion to point out; and also from others unto which man is liable. For we must throughout this melancholy survey keep in mind that the express object of the Saviour's mission was to defeat the evil one, whereinsoever he had defeated man. And as by haunting man's imagination with illusive terrors, he had oft achieved his purpose, reason itself suggests that

* It has been already noticed that there is good reason to believe that sufferings of the mind are infinitely more exquisite than those of the body; an observation which we have found fully supported by the able opinions of Dr. Blair and Dr. Johnson.

he would not leave this last artifice untried, (particularly as the enfeebled state of his antagonist, at this tremendous juncture, now promised some success,) but, in conjunction with confederate fiends, infuse into his mind such dismal apprehensions, such ideal horrors of unreal evils, as he might hope would heighten his distress, and still appal him more. And that the wily foe did to the utmost exercise this species of his malice, is the opinion of our most able commentators.

“Dr. Scott and Mr. Fleming both imagine that Christ during his agony in the garden, struggled with the spirits of darkness. The former says he was surrounded with a mighty host of devils, who exercised all their force and malice to persecute and distract his innocent soul. And the latter supposes (and we conceive very justly) that Satan hoped, by overpowering him here, to have prevented the accomplishment of the prophecies relating to the manner and circumstances of his death.”* This would indeed have been a triumph to gorge the pride and malice of the infernal chieftain, could he by his malignant machinations have upset the eternal purpose of almighty God.

Dr. Porteus on this subject thus remarks: “Nor is it at all improbable that his great enemy and ours, the prince of darkness, whom he came to overthrow, and with whom he maintained a constant conflict through life, and triumphed over by death;—it is not, I say, at all improbable that this malignant being should exert his utmost

* See Fleming's *Christiology*, vol. ii. p. 130; and Scott's *Christian Life*, vol. iii. p. 139.

power by presenting real, and raising up imaginary terrors, to shake the constancy of his soul, and deter him from the great work he had undertaken.”*

That included in the stratagems devised by Satan against good men, is the infusing in their minds dread of unreal evils, and haunting their imaginations with illusive terrors, the observations of mankind, together with scriptural information, concur to fully prove. We read in Genesis that “a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.” David in the Psalms is repeatedly complaining that his soul is sore troubled, that he is vexed in his heart, that he is poured out like water, that his heart also in the midst of his body is even like melting wax, that he is sore troubled, that his soul was full of heaviness, and disquieted within him. St. Paul tells us, that lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him. It may perhaps not appear so immediately reconcileable with reason to suppose that the great Strengtheners and Upholders of the vast family in heaven and in earth, in whom are hid all wisdom and all knowledge, could have himself been daunted and dismayed by visionary fears; but we must here consider and reflect, that throughout the scriptural relation of that wondrous union, the highest and the lowest nature, the former is invariably represented as sharing and sustaining

* Porteus's Lectures, vol. ii. p. 247.

every suffering to which mortality is liable; in like manner as does the soul of man during its union with our frail humanity;* and also that these sacred pages likewise inform us, that though it has pleased the Father to impart unto his Son every principle and property of Deity; that “as the Father has life in himself, so in like manner has he given to the Son to have life in himself; that he giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him, and that it pleases the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;” yet that it does at the same time invariably represent the Son as depending on the Father for the continuation and support of these inestimable gifts.

But what was given could doubtless be withdrawn. Now, at this trying hour, the less support received by human weakness from the divinity, the greater and more illustrious would be its triumph over its foe. It therefore appears very reasonable to surmise, that when this tragic scene commenced, the full supply of heavenly gifts which in him dwelt, began to depart: the sequel tends to prove the truth of this conjecture, for then we find He was forsaken quite. Now, anguish past conception must have seized him, to be thus deserted at this terrific crisis. How dread the panic, when first he felt this tremendous hour solely delivered to the power of darkness,

* We have already offered observations which we conceive must incontestably prevent in future, and refute, as Dr. Doddridge justly terms it, the wild notion Hilary seems to maintain, namely, that Christ was incapable of any painful sensations. See Dr. Mill.

and lost his wonted comfort, his Father's consolation, when succour most was needed! How torturing the contrast must have been to him who was so rich in heavenly joys, now to become so poor indeed! For him who had ever been in plenitude of bliss in his blessed Father's bosom, now to be sunk in lowest depth of woe! There never was, nor ever could be, sorrows (save the sorrows caused by sin) like those endured by the glorious Son of God, while invested in our frail humanity. For it must be remembered that it was the woman's seed whose sorrows then He carried, whose sorrows He shared. It was the woman's seed who had yielded to the tempter, and who was now ordained to break the wily serpent's head. Within this feeble composition long had dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily—the veiled Deity, the eternal Son of God, to whom the Father gives his Spirit without measure, and who, thus assisted, had hitherto presided.

But we feel further and fully confirmed in the justness of the conjecture stated, namely, that at the awful moment when the blessed Redeemer entered in the garden of Gethsemane, the full supply of heavenly gifts which in him dwelt, began to depart; because we are expressly told that this was the terrific juncture, when he began to be sorrowful, sore amazed, and very heavy. For though he had through life avowed himself much straitened till his sufferings were accomplished, yet at some intervals we even find, during this life of sorrow, the suffering conqueror re-

joicing in his spirit, and going through the affecting scene that immediately preceded his agony in the garden, with composure and with firmness; exculpating the woman who poured the ointment on his head, saying, "She hath wrought a good work on me; she hath done it for my burial;" directing his disciples where to prepare the parting passover; declaring which the traitor was that would wickedly betray him; most affectionately ordaining commemoration of his blessed body, on the point of being broken—of his blessed blood, on the point of being effused; and calmly singing an hymn with his beloved apostles. But how widely different were the emotions which the Son of God evinced when bereaved of his Father's consolation; when unsuccoured from the source whence strength alone does flow! He, destitute, was left, in conjunction with our weak nature, to face the power of darkness, unsheathing every dart, devising every stratagem by which it could defeat its foe.

We have on a former inspection of our Redeemer's sufferings, when tempted in the wilderness, had occasion to remark its being highly probable that the superior faculties of those high orders of intelligents, those heavenly hierarchs, principalities, and powers, who with such intense desire bent down to view and pry into the internal sufferings endured by the Saviour at this melancholy crisis, would render them far more sensible of the full extent of the Redeemer's merits, in resolutely persisting in virtue amidst such accumulated distresses (and from which he possessed

the power to have instantly freed himself; for he had power to lay down his life, and he had power to keep it: if he pleased to pray his Father, legions of angels were instant at his command) than our limited perceptions could possibly discover. Their penetration would enable them to discover his inward struggles—discover his arduous conflicts, with an understanding of which we are utterly incapable. Our ideas can only be formed from exterior circumstances, the degree of sufferance we have ourselves endured, or the complainant disclosures of our fellow-creatures; and from such sources of information, through the kind indulgence of our heavenly Father, we have derived but little information, and therefore are most incompetent judges of what our blessed Saviour suffered. And none save himself could know in its extreme extent the agony he endured from deprivation of his Father's consolation; bereft of which it plainly appears he was in anguish left to struggle through the dismal scenes which immediately preceded his torturing crucifixion; as we know he was during the dreadful hours which occupied his barbarous execution. This was it which wrung from him, when hanging on the cross, the heart-rending exclamation, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This was it which did alone extort that afflictive expostulation which no corporeal torments could or did excite. Here he completely fulfilled the ancient prophecy,—he was like a lamb led to the excruciating slaughter, and like a sheep before

his cruel shearers, dumb, and opened not his mouth. In his mouth complaint was never found.

The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, were those very things which, in the eternal purpose of almighty God, he purposed in Christ, to the intent that unto the angelic pryncedoms might be known, by the glory that should follow, the manifold wisdom of God. These were the very things which they desired with such intense desire to look into and fully comprehend. These high exalted beings doubtless contemplated, with an understanding admiration and adoration of which we are utterly incapable, the internal agonies endured by the glorious Son of God. While the shrewdness and sagacity of that infernal crew, who were such principal actors in this doleful scene, did most probably give them a complete insight of his internal misery, and increased their power to exasperate and augment it. But this was their hour and the power of darkness. (Luke xxii. 53.) This declaration the noble sufferer uttered in the garden of Gethsemane; a declaration powerfully confirmatory of the truth of our conclusion, by propounding additional proofs that the anguish he endured, from a deprivation of divine comforts, commenced at this juncture. For had he still remained in full possession of that unceasing source of support and consolation, it would most probably have counteracted the malice of the evil powers, which at this terrific crisis they to the uttermost began to exercise; and have totally baffled all their attempts to harass and appal him.

“This tragical recital supplies a most reviving cordial unto those who are oppressed and bowed down (as the best of men, to exercise their faith and patience, sometimes are) with loads of grief, unsuccoured by spiritual consolation; who find, as the Psalmist expresses it, their flesh and their heart failing, and their spirits sinking within them; to reflect, that in this state even of extreme depression, there is no guilt; that it is no mark of God’s displeasure, as even his beloved Son was no stranger to it.”* And had he not unto the uttermost endured this heaviest of afflictions, he could not have been tempted in all points like to what we have been.

* Porteus.

CHAPTER XI.

It should not pass unremarked, that in the latter portion of our present research was involved an observation which proved that our blessed Saviour had illustriously triumphed over a trial not as yet specified, and which mortality has been sometimes doomed to suffer, namely, perseverance in virtue while enduring tortures, from which the sufferers possessed the power to have freed themselves by forfeiture of virtue. This power He eminently possessed high above all others. He had full power to lay down his life and He had full power to keep it. This victory the noble army of Christian martyrs often gloriously obtained. In many cases we read that they could have delivered themselves from the most acute sufferings, even by a temporary mental reservation and recantation of the truth. Some persons have had severe sufferings inflicted on them in the hope of extorting a confession of crimes which, it may be, they had not committed. And various are the instances which might be specified, as exercised for the intent of obtaining the forfeiture of innocence, and hope of future

glory, by sinful acquiescence. But all trials of this nature were gloriously vanquished by our divine Redeemer.

It is furthermore observable, that the fear of torture and of death has often been surmounted by passions quite at variance with pure and genuine virtue. It was on this account essential for the great Victor to demonstrate that the energies excited by pure and genuine virtue could and did, even in opposition to the combined force of every obstacle to such exemplification, prove equally triumphant over the fear of torture and of death, as those produced by spurious and turbulent passions. The love of fame, the desire of renown, does oft excite the most extraordinary courage in meeting, and fortitude while suffering, excruciating torments. These passions, when intermingled in a savage mind with the wish of disappointing their cruel and exulting foes, by proving all attempts to extort complaint from them ineffectual, does often stimulate the hardy sufferers even "to court an increase of torture, by boasting of their own exploits—insulting their tormentors for their want of skill—in avenging their friends and relations, warning them of the vengeance that awaited them on account of their deaths, and exciting their ferocity by the most provoking reproaches and threats."* But He

* Robertson's History of America.

Dr. Robertson further observes upon this subject, "that the amazing steadiness with which the Americans endure the most exquisite torments, flows from a principle of honour instilled early, and cultivated with such care as to inspire man in his

who despised the shame of his ignominious death, doubtless despised such fame, though from far different motives, He did completely obtain it.

In the foregoing dismal survey, we behold the Lamb of God involved in a complication of unutterable sorrows, struggling with our infirmities in their extreme extent, exasperated and worked on by the combined power of darkness; deserted by his God; unsuccoured by his Father; agonized by the fear lest he should not prove victor in a contest on which did pend the salvation of the intellectual system of the boundless universe. These unparalleled sorrows do, we conceive, clearly account for our blessed Saviour discover-

rudest state with an heroic magnanimity, to which philosophy hath endeavoured in vain to form him when more highly improved and polished. This invincible constancy he has been taught to consider as the chief distinction of man, and the highest attainment of a warrior. The ideas that influence his heart are few; they operate, of course, with more decisive effect, than when the mind is crowded with a multiplicity of objects, or distracted by the variety of its pursuits; and when every motive that operates with force on the mind of a savage prompts him to suffer with dignity, he will bear what might seem to be impossible for human patience to sustain. But whenever the fortitude of the Americans is not roused to exertion by their ideas of honour, their feelings of pain are the same with those of the rest of mankind. Nor is that patience under sufferings for which the Americans have been so justly celebrated, an universal attainment; the constancy of many of the victims is overcome by the agonies of torture. Their weakness and lamentations complete the triumph of their enemies, and reflect disgrace upon their country." And numberless are the instances that might be cited of the wonderful patience with which the ancient Lacedemonians, Spartans, and youths of the school of Lycurgus, endured agony and death.

ing such excessive dread on the approach of tortures which some have met with most heroic courage. And when we further consider how entirely feelings of this nature depend upon the temperature of the mind, and the physical state of the body—that death is of all things most abhorrent to our nature—that many through fear of death are all their life-time subject unto bondage—that the enemy he was engaging possessed the power over death, and in this his hour would not fail to take his full advantage, would not fail to arm it with all its terrors, and distract and terrify the pure, innocent, lamb-like Son of God with such ghastly fears of the pangs attendant on dissolution, (and which he was on the point of inflicting in their highest possible degree,) as would excite the utmost horror—that there is every reason to believe that the early Christian martyrs were wonderfully, if not miraculously supported by the Trinity, while enduring the tortures inflicted on them, (and this, in the first instance, that of St. Stephen, we know with certainty to have been the case,)* while, on the contrary, God's own beloved Son was forsaken of his Father, and deprived of that ineffable comfort he had eternally enjoyed in the bosom of his Father—that the express design of the Redeemer's mission was to glorify God by obtaining a victory over every infirmity—that he was not only tempted in all points like to what we have been, but at this trying hour was attacked by the combined force of every obstacle to the display of magnani-

* See Addison's Evidences, on this subject.

mity ;—what a wide distinction does exist between these being subdued separately, as they often are by us, and his at once resisting and defeating the whole battery of the enemy, set in array against him ; all that the world, the flesh and the devil, could do to conquer and subdue him ; and that the lamb-like Saviour was unarmed by that sturdy hardihood, sullen obstinacy, or savage ferocity, or vain desire of fame, which somewhat fortifies against the fear of torture and of death—it does, we think, entirely remove the difficulty of accounting for his extreme dejection. “ And our Lord did not pretend to that unfeeling heroism, that insensibility to pain and affliction which some of the ancient philosophers affected. On the contrary, he felt like us, and far beyond what we can ever feel, the sorrows of mortality.”* Dr. Doddridge observes “ that the words our translators use when describing the awful scene before us, are very flat, and fall vastly short of the emphasis of those terms in which the evangelists describe it. For *λυπεισθαι* signifies *to be penetrated with* the most lively and piercing sorrow ; and *αδημονειν*, to be quite *depressed*, and almost overwhelmed with the load. St. Mark expresses it, if possible, in a more forcible and stronger manner, for *εκθαμβεισθαι* imports the most shocking mixture of terror and amazement, and *περιλυπος*, in the next verse, intimates that he was surrounded with sorrow on every side, so that it broke in upon him with such violence, that, humanly speaking, there was no way of escape.”

* Porteus.

But here it much behoves us to mark the great example set us by the glorious Son of God. He resolved all he suffered into the will of God, and his own will into patient acquiescence. Though, to render his triumph the more illustrious, he was forsaken by his God, he did not forsake his God, or even his frail companions. The first suggestion that from his dread sorrows rose, was kindly to warn his feeble followers of their approaching danger. "Then saith he unto them, Tarry ye here, and watch with me, and pray that ye enter not into temptation." His own resource in this his deep distress was humble, fervent prayer. "And he went forward a little, and was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down and fell on his face on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee: O my Father! if it be possible take away this cup, and let it pass from me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt." On this petition we shall first remark, how widely different was the purport of it from that he offered up previous to his entrance into the garden of Gethsemane; we there find him calmly, and only supplicating his almighty Father to aid him in the vindication of his glory, without expressing any desire to have the bitter cup removed and taken from him; and urging the very reason for obtaining his request which brought him to that hour of anguish which now was coming on him. "Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify

thee." It was for the glorification of the glorious Trinity that Christ suffered on the cross; but now bowed down by the agonizing fear lest he should not prove victor in his combat with the head and power of darkness; deprived of his Father's consolation, and nearly overwhelmed with the distracting terrors described by the evangelists; how changed in his petition! How fervently he now prays, that if it were possible the hour might pass from him!

Secondly, in this request we perceive some slight indication of a weakness not uncommon in man, namely, that of indulging hope when hope was hopeless. Though this hope was grounded on, and intermingled with his perfect knowledge of his Father's nature. "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; O my Father! if it be possible," ("consistent with what thy wisdom has appointed for the advancement of thy glory, and the salvation of intelligents;"* —"to be as effectually accomplished in any other way as by my death;"†)—"I earnestly beseech thee that thou immediately wouldst take away this cup of bitterness and terror; yea, let it now pass from me; and let comfort and peace return unto my soul.‡ Nevertheless, if thou seest it necessary to continue it, or even to add yet more grievous ingredients to it, I am here ready to receive it, in submission to thy will, and resolutely say, upon the whole, Not as I will, but as

* Doddridge.

† Porteus.

‡ These quotations prove that this view of the subject is not an hypothesis peculiar to the author.

thou wilt. For though nature cannot but shrink back from these sufferings, it is the determinate purpose of my soul to bear whatsoever thine infinite wisdom shall see fit to appoint.* “And he cometh unto his disciples, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou! couldst not thou watch with me one hour? watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak.” “That is, I know your hearts are right and your intentions good; but the weakness of your frail nature overpowers your best resolutions; and the things which ye would ye do not.” Dr. Porteus further remarks that “extreme affliction, as we all but too well know, has a natural tendency, not only to depress our spirits, but to sour our tempers, and to render us fretful, irritable, and severe towards the failings of others. But how did it operate on our blessed Lord? Instead of injuring, it seemed rather to improve the heavenly mildness of his disposition, and to make him more indulgent to the failings of his followers; for when in the very midst of all his anguish, they could so far forget his sorrows and their own professions of attachment to him, as to sink into sleep, how gentle was his reproof to them, for their want of sensibility and attention to him. ‘Could you not watch with me one hour?’ And even this affectionate rebuke he immediately tempers with a kind excuse for them: ‘The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ And when he had thus gently admonished them, he went away again the

* Doddridge.

second time to a little distance from them, and prayed as he had done before, speaking much the same words, with the like ardour and submission, saying, O my Father, if it be necessary, in pursuance of the great end for which I came into the world, that I should endure these grievous sufferings, and this cup cannot pass from me without my drinking it, and wringing out, as it were, the very dregs of it, I will still humbly acquiesce, and say, Thy will be done, how painful soever it may be to flesh and blood. And when he returned, he found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy, neither wist they what to answer him. The fatigue and trouble they had lately undergone, had exhausted their spirits, and their eyes were quite weighed down with weariness and sorrow; and he admonished them again as before, and they were so thoroughly confounded that they knew not what to answer him; and yet immediately after they were so weak and senseless, as to relapse into the same fault again."

It was probably only those three disciples, Peter, James, and John, who appear to have been the peculiar favourites of their heavenly Master, (having been by him selected to behold his glorious transfiguration on the mountain Tabor, and now were chosen to retire somewhat apart with him, that they who had witnessed his glory might also closely view his humiliation and affliction, during this dreadful struggle,) that were so overwhelmed with fatigue and sorrow, as to sink down at such a distressing juncture, into so unseasonable a stupor; for, in that state of insensibility,

they could neither fulfil the command enjoined, of watching with their Lord, or be fully competent to describe the agonies he endured. But it is here observable, that the four evangelists concur in mentioning that all the disciples (excepting Judas, who had quitted them whilst at supper,) entered into the garden of Gethsemane; and each of them recites the same account of this most awful scene, excepting John, whose heavy sleep, occasioned perhaps by his excess of grief, prevented the incessant watch he was bound to have maintained.*

“And he left them and went away again and prayed the third time, saying the same words; Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.” “And in this last address his combat was so violent and severe, that he was almost overwhelmed, and therefore for his assistance against the powers of darkness, which united their force against him, in the most terrible manner,”†—“there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening

* There is not, however, an indispensable necessity that the writers of the sacred volume should have been always eye-witnesses of the facts which they relate; nor was it indeed possible that they should invariably have been so. As for instance, Moses could not have witnessed the creation of our lower heavens and earth. But all Scripture having been given by inspiration of God, every deficiency of this kind has been, from this unfailing source, amply and clearly supplied; and from hence we are certainly indebted for the relation of that very extraordinary transaction, Christ's temptation in the wilderness, as the history does not make mention of any human witness of it.

† Doddridge.

him" — "suggesting such holy consolations as were most proper to animate his soul in such a terrific struggle."* As his bitter sorrows, sore amazement, and heaviness increased, his torturing dread of sight being now overpowered by darkness, doubtless increased also.

Previous unto his seizure with these horrific terrors, though he then declared that his soul was troubled, and exclaimed, "What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour;" yet he checked the petition by reasoning calmly and justly, "For this cause came I unto this hour; Father, glorify thy name." But amidst the dreadful complication of unparalleled sorrows with which he now conflicted, weaknesses, infirmities, and fears, appear to have so oppressed and borne so heavy on him, as to make him almost despair of proving victor in the tremendous contest in which he was engaged; and somewhat to avert his eye from the stupendous purposes to be achieved by his death, from the joy set forth before him, and the glory that should follow. For though he ever maintained the most perfect resignation to his Father's will, and the most determined resolution to fulfil it, he persevered (as St. Paul informs us) with strong crying and tears in offering up prayers and supplications unto him who was able to save him from death—continuing to manifest the weakness of humanity, by fostering a hope that his Almighty Father might adopt some other plan for the vindication of his glory than that Omniscience had eternally determined on, namely, by his sufferings and death.

* Doddridge.

The counsels of omniscience could not, however, be possibly overthrown: this was impossible; for had it been possible, God had doubtless granted his beloved Son's request. But God well knew him in whom He formed his everlasting purpose. The stone God laid in Zion was a tried stone; the foundation on which He builded was a sure foundation. And though we know He did not save his beloved Son from death, yet we are expressly told "he was heard in that he feared." The woman's seed, as was of old predicted, obtained full victory. Here his fears were gloriously removed; his prayers were fully answered; though crucified in weakness, he was raised in power. And it must not pass unremarked, that by the appearance of one angel ministering unto Christ, we derive the comforting assurance that if the great heavenly hero, the express design of whose mission it was to endure, in its most extreme extent, every trial and temptation incident to probationary states, was not left wholly unsuccoured to wade through his heaviest distress, that we also shall never, in our extremest exigencies, be left wholly destitute of support.

But to appreciate justly the small degree of aid supplied to our Lord, we should reflect that, supposing the kind solace of one fellow-mortal to be the only source from whence our succour flowed, yet it would far, far exceed the succour extended unto our Lord. For what was the ministration of one humble friend—what the appearance of one angel, to strengthen him who was the great Lord of angels? And the end proposed by

this celestial minister's appearance, it should be peculiarly observed, was not to console or sympathize with the illustrious sufferer, but to strengthen him; for while he fostered the smallest ray of hope that the bitter cup could be removed from him, it naturally produced an undecided and perplexed state of mind. To remove which, by ending all his hope of possible escape, and irrevocably determining his inevitable doom, appears to have been the end intended by the angel's ministration.

As the following considerations are entirely selected from the inspired volume, we shall, we trust, be pardoned for conjecturing that the considerations urged at this awful moment, to the great Lord of angels, by his humble ministrator, may have been somewhat of the nature of these we now venture to state.

Sole heir of all things, Creator of all worlds,
Brightness of thy great Father's glory, image
Express of his resplendent Person; even
In whose deep humiliation the angelic
Hierarchies, prinedoms, and powers are conjoined
By supreme command, to worship and adore—
On whose account we've been so highly honoured,
As to receive thy Father's charge concerning
Thee, to bear thee up, lest thou against a stone
Thy foot should dash—impell'd by duteous zeal,
By high permission sanction'd, in most profound
Abasement, I humbly now approach. Great Lord
Of angels, whose gracious condescension we
Behold, with most admiring wonder, clothed in
A nature a little lower than ours; 'gainst
Which the tempter levels all his darts, and aims
His dark designs; for well he knows that this poor

Frail thing, in which thou art now envelop'd, is
The appointed instrument to spoil the power
Of darkness. But it is the appropriate
Wisdom of thy Father's counsel to confound
The mighty by weak things, and base, and even
Things despised, hath the Almighty chosen;
Yea and things which are not, to bring to nought the
Things that are; who dare t' oppose Omnipotence,
Which to defy, the wily potentate, fraught
With weak malice, and presumption impious,
Now doth try. To defeat his stratagems, my
Utmost powers I'll now exert, by recalling
To thy mind the magnitude immense of God's
Eternal purpose, purposed in thee; from
Which thy pungent sorrows, by him contriv'd, does
Somewhat now avert thine eye, bending it down
To this earthly clod, and fixing it on grief.
O raise it to yon radiant orbs, teeming
With intellectual life, whose countless hosts
Assemble now to behold thy momentous
Contest. O raise it to those glorious realms
Which to thine omnipresent eye all open
Lie; where thy bless'd Father reigns, enthroned in light,
'Midst cherubims and seraphims of glory.
These all bend down to view thy wondrous combat
With hell's infernal chieftain, and his combined
Compeers, who are all up in arms 'gainst thee. Their
Faith now waits the event of thy great Father's
Glory, breaking full forth in bright unsullied
Lustre; for that shall be reveal'd. The virtue
Of this great link of Beings, forming the vast
Progressive chain of moral excellence which
Terminates in Deity, will be shook, if
The consummate wisdom of its Head is not
Made manifest by the serpent's ruin. But
If his impotence thou openly dost show,
It will stand for ever firm; thy triumph be
Complete, and by the shedding of thy blessed
Blood, the intellectual system of the
Boundless universe will be at peace with God.

In Elah's vale thine earthly father David
Did, while a stripling youth, unarmed run to
Accept th' insulting challenge of Philistia's
Proud champion, with a well-placed trust in
An almighty power, undaunted faced the threats
And vaunts with which the disdain-foe drew near ;
And firmly approaching the haughty giant,
Addressed thus this impious blasphemer :
Thou comest to me with sword, and spear, and shield,
But I come to thee in the name of the living
Lord of hosts ; the God of Israel's armies,
To whom, thou foul idolater, hast dared to
Bid defiance. This day the Lord will give thee
In mine hand, to smite and take thine head from thee ;
That all the earth may know there is a God in
Israel ; that all the vast assembled hosts
Of Israel and Philistia may know
That the Lord saveth not with sword and spear ; for
The battle is the Lord's, and He will give you
Into his people Israel's hands. Then
Hasting to'ards him, slung a well-aim'd stone, which pierc'd
Goliath's head, and fell'd him to the ground. This
Valiant deed achieved, the victorious
Shepherd straight mounted on the giant's pond'rous
Corse, unsheathing his own sword ; (for there was no
Sword in the hand of David ;) with it he quick
Dissevered, from off its gigantic trunk,
Goliath's wounded head ; and took the reproach
From Israel, making an open show of
The impotence of him who had dar'd t' oppose
Omnipotence, and received from his King
The promised reward. Thus now, thou the great
Shepherd, wilt, in thine earthly prototype's weak
Nature, accept the insulting challenge of
Hell's proud infernal champion, and with firm
Trust in thy bless'd Father's power, unarm'd
Haste to meet the impious chieftain, undaunted
By his vaunts and wiles, his scourge, his nails, and spear,
Thou'lt firmly approach him, e'en in this dreaded
Hour. Thou knowest that God hath delivered

Unto the power of darkness, but his head thou'lt
Surely break, and with his own devices thou'lt
Destroy his power; thus take the reproach from
Thy great Father's honour, that the assembled
Hosts of heaven and hell may know that the Lord
God omnipotent reigneth; that th' assembled
Universe may behold the impotence of
Him who has dar'd to defy Omnipotence:
For the battle is the Lord's, and He will give
Thine enemies into thy conquering hand.
In visionary view you late beheld Satan
Like lightning fall: thy victory over him
Soon will realize this sight, and hurl him to
Perdition. Now that firm faith in God, which
To thy followers thou hast enjoined thyself,
Will full display, in this its time of trial.
For thou wilt not be overcome of evil,
But thou wilt overcome evil by good; so
"Heavenly love shall out-do hellish hate;" and
Though thou wilt be crucified in weakness,
Thou wilt be raised in power. O! only-
Begotten of thy great almighty Father,
Perfect partaker of his bless'd nature, Love!
What bliss transcendent then will meet thee! what a
Pure happiness, well-suited to thy divine
Benignity! whose great joy is joy t' impart;
When by thyself thou 'st reconciled not only things
In earth, but things in heaven, and gathered all
In one: when penn'd in the same fold, th' unnumber'd
Flock, composed of every creature that
Is in heaven and earth, burst out in grateful
Rapturous acclamations, saying, that
Worthy is the slaughtered Lamb, who has redeemed
Us unto God by his own blood, to receive
Power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and
Honour, and glory, and blessing. Then with our
Loudest Alleluiahs we will proclaim that
The Lord God omnipotent reigneth; that the
Kingdoms of all worlds are become the kingdoms
Of our Lord and of his bless'd Son; and he shall

Reign King of kings, and Lord of lords, for ever
And for ever. With this immensity of
Joy before thee set, thou wilt endure the cross,
Thou wilt despise the shame.

We previously observed our having been led to conjecture that the angel might have suggested to our blessed Lord considerations somewhat of the nature of those just selected from Scripture, by the reason assigned for this celestial minister's appearance, which is not described as being intended to console or sympathize with him, but to strengthen him. All his petitions subsequent to his entrance into the garden, discovered the most fervent desire to have this bitter cup of affliction taken from him; and though he always manifested the most perfect resignation to his Father's will, and the most determined resolution to fulfil it, yet, as hath been also already remarked, while he cherished the smallest ray of hope that the Supreme Being might adopt other measures for the vindication of his glory than those to be achieved by his sufferings and death, it naturally produced an undecided and perplexing state of mind; and we are powerfully confirmed in the justness of our supposition, namely, that to remove this by determining his purpose and irrevocably fixing his doom, was the end proposed by the heavenly ministration; from two reasons: first, our finding no further repetition of his entreaties that the hour might pass from him; and, secondly, by the immediate effect produced; for no alternative being now left, the necessity of his sufferings appearing imperious; his distress and

terror were consequently greatly heightened and augmented, and the conflict became in the extremest degree violent and acute. “And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” How unlike to man! For the agonies endured by our blessed Saviour increased his devotion, and fixed him suppliant at the throne of grace. The matter of his fervent prayer, at this agonizing juncture, it may be inferred from the light thrown on this awful subject by the information of St. Paul, was for the Divine assistance to carry him through the dreadful scene that lay before him, with honour and with victory. For the torturing fear lest he should not prove victor in the terrific contest in which he was engaged, and which was probably originally insinuated by his subtil adversary, he would doubtless at this momentous crisis, to the utmost of his power, increase and exasperate. And his terror and agitation now became so excessive as to force the crimson fluid through the pores; which “intermingling with the sweat, dropped in clots on the ground, as he bowed himself to the earth.” Dr. Whitby observes “that Aristotle and Diodorus Siculus both mention bloody sweats as attending some extraordinary agony of the mind; and Dr. Doddridge informs us that he finds Leti, in his Life of Pope Sixtus V. page 200, and Sir John Chardin, in his History of Persia, vol. i. page 126, mentioning a like phenomenon; to which Dr. Jackson, in his Works, vol. ii. page 819, adds another

from Thuanus, lib. x. page 221." And so violent and extraordinary was now the commotion into which our blessed Saviour's animal frame was thrown, that notwithstanding his being in the open air, and the cool of the night, his sweat ran off with uncommon violence, and was productive of the effect we have just been citing, as mentioned by the before-named authors. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples (Mark) the third time, he found them sleeping for sorrow, (Matthew,) and said unto them, Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. Wonderful and unparalleled love, thus to remain unaltered, unimpaired, in this his utmost exigence! (Matthew.) "And he saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest; it is enough, behold the hour is come, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners; rise, let us be going; behold he is at hand that doth betray me."

Th' Omnipresent eye, which pierc'd through the thin veil
Which now o'ercast it, beheld the traitor's act,
And mark'd his near approach. Tremendous crisis!
The dreadful moment come, and the last precious
Hour past gone, and half consumed in anxious
Distrust, and deluding hope, that might solely
Have been spent in seeking heavenly succour, and
Preparing to meet impending fate with firm
And dignified composure. Behold him now,
Amidst his agonizing struggle, with nought
But virtue t' oppose the high-flowing tide that
In him rolled, and stem this torrent of fear,
Terror, and dismay. Loudly upon him did
Stern duty call, to instant rise and meet his

Foes with fortitude unequall'd; and he who
Ever kept himself complete arrayed out
Of God's arsenal, could now at once obey
This summons; and guarded well in th' Almighty's
Armour, was able in his evil day to
Stand 'gainst all the devil's wiles; for wielding straight
The ponderous shield of faith, he quickly quenched
The tempter's fiery darts; and with a
Resolution high as heaven, and
Magnanimity unparallel'd, went forth
To meet the dreaded danger.

END OF VOL. II.

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